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ABSTRACT

A collection of 26 stories, told by Belle Herbert, an Alaskan elder, in the Gwich'in Athabaskan language, is presented with side-by-side translation in English. Introductory sections give background information about the author's life and the stories told here. Stories include: a moose hunt; life in the old days (skin tents and clothing); hunting; traveling as a child; traveling in the Porcupine country; sickness; old-time clothing; life in the old days; traveling, marriages, and a tragedy; traveling up the Porcupine River; traveling around Graphite, and curing by a medicine man; burial customs; skin-tanning, rabbit-snaring, and old-time cooking; old-time household furnishings and the coming of cloth, and muskrat hunting and the coming of guns; hunting in the old days; marriage then and now; Belle's marriage; the arrival of white people; care of the sick; family history and life in the old days; rabbit-skin blankets; some notable people and the coming of Christianity; religion, fishtraps, the coming of airplanes, and how a young man got a wife; another marriage story, and old-time dishes and cooking; and life in the old days, brush men, and the coming of religion. A map, photographs, and drawings illustrate the text. (MSE)

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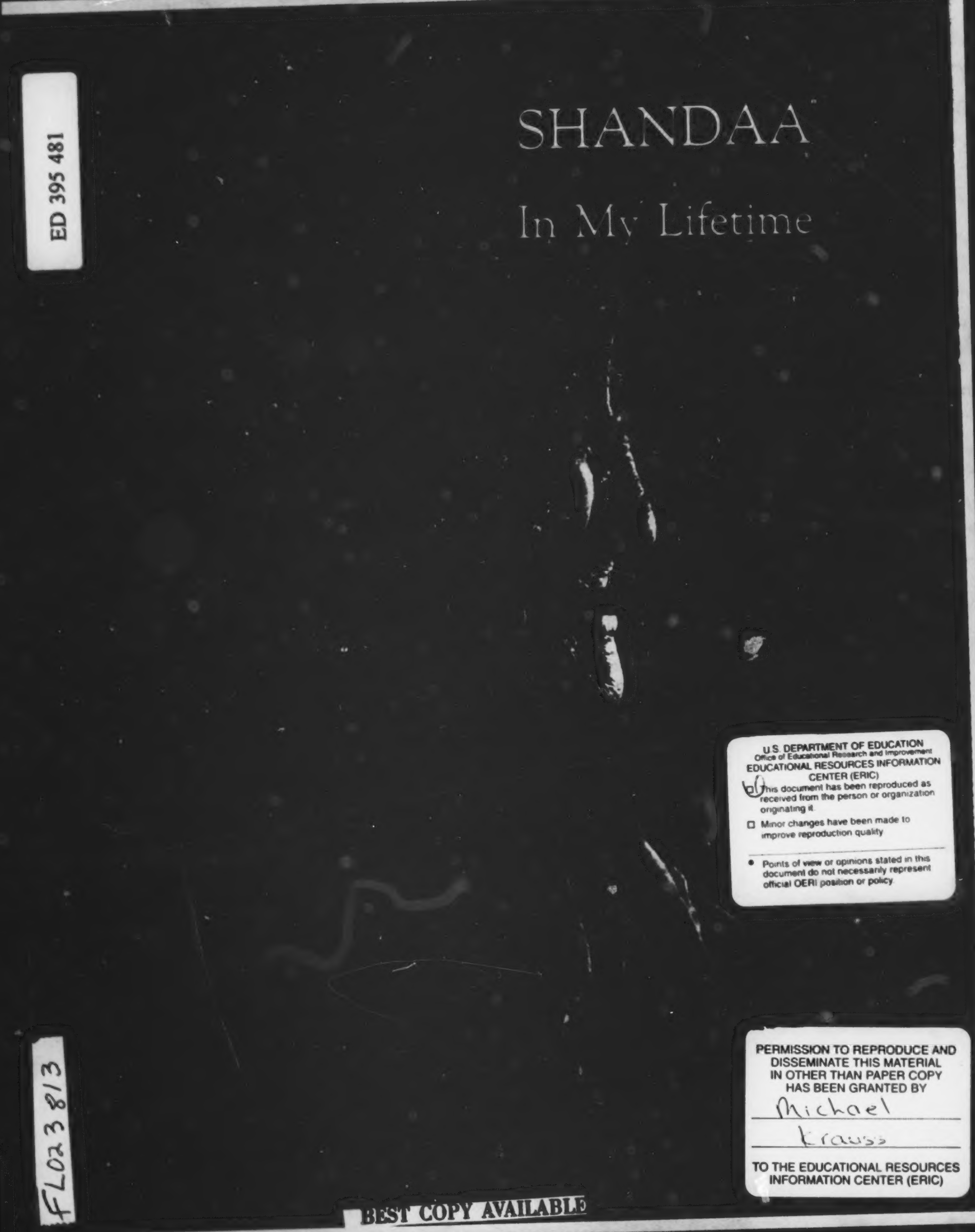
SHANDAA

In My Lifetime



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SHANDAA

IN MY LIFETIME

Told by Belle Herbert

Recorded and edited by Bill Pfisterer
with the assistance of Alice Moses

Transcribed and translated by Katherine Peter

Edited by Jane McGary

Drawings by Sandy Jamieson

Photographs by Rob Stapleton

Reprinted for the
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1992

SHANDAA

IN MY LIFETIME

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Gwich'in Athabaskan and English

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PREFACE

The Honorable Jay S. Hammond
Governor of Alaska

In the summer of 1980, I had the remarkable experience of visiting the village of Chalkyitsik, a small village nested on the banks of the Black River, a tributary of the mighty Yukon, about four dozen miles east of Fort Yukon. The village, lying just a few miles above the Arctic Circle, is not distinctively different from the hundred other villages one finds in rural Alaska.

In a cabin in the village, however, I talked with an occupant who can be described only as remarkably different indeed. Her name is Belle Herbert, and she has been an inhabitant of the territory, and later the state of Alaska, for much longer than anyone else can remember. That's because she is one of the oldest living citizens of Alaska, and possibly of America.

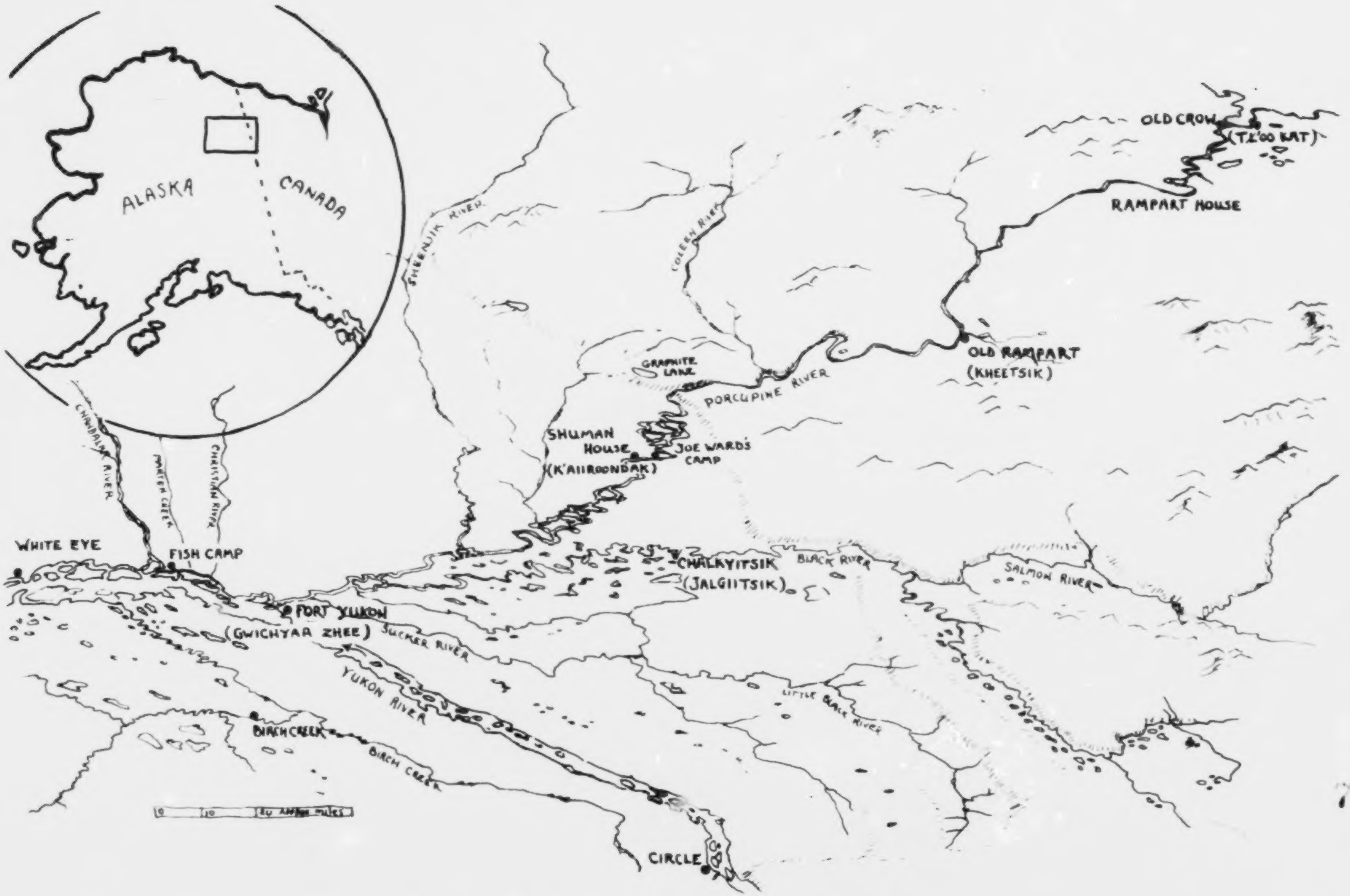
Village records are unclear about her birth. Estimates range from as early as 1854 to the 1870s—1861 being the most logical according to the State's Bureau of Vital Statistics. Mrs. Herbert, while unable to vouch for the accuracy of any birth date, does have clear memories, even to this day, of events which historically should have occurred between the 1860s and 1880s. For far too many of us, remembering our grocery lists of yesterday is a difficult chore. Remembering an event which occurred over a century ago is impossible indeed. Mrs. Herbert is worthy of honor and interest for other reasons than the secrets of a remarkably long life.

In Alaska's context, she was born nearly at the dawn of white exploration of Interior Alaska. Given that Fort Yukon was first established by the Hudson's Bay Company in 1847 as its first outpost in northern Russian Alaska, it is safe to assume that Mrs. Herbert probably witnessed the coming of the first whites to her area. She would have been a young girl when Alaska was purchased by a Secretary of State by the name of William Seward, from Mother Russia. She would have been a young woman when gold was first discovered in Southeast Alaska near Sitka in 1872, and a maturing lady by the time gold was found at Bonanza Creek in the nearby Yukon, and in Nome in 1898.

She has lived through most of the state's recorded history. Most importantly, she has experienced the history of this state which often has not been recorded, the daily struggle to survive in a beautiful but harsh environment, where hard work was not an ethic but a necessity in order to eat, stay warm, and live through the long winters in order to enjoy the rebirth of the short summer.

Other societies, such as the Chinese, honor their elders and treat them as national treasures because of the wisdom they possess and the lessons they can impart. Alaskans, like most Americans, frequently fail to be fully cognizant of our past—often condemning ourselves to relive the errors of our past. Belle Herbert is a remarkably lucid, engaging woman who offers us all a vision of life in the rugged far north. We would all do well to acquaint ourselves with her memories, because her knowledge, once imparted, can live forever. Once she is gone, however, her memories of life in a virgin wilderness, in a land still largely unseen by man, unfortunately will also be gone forever.

She may truly be the last of a vanishing breed, a true Alaskan.


ALASKA
CANADA
OLD CROW
(TŁ'OO KAT)
RAMPART HOUSE
SHEENJIK RIVER
COLEEN RIVER
GRAPHITE LAKE
PORCUPINE RIVER
OLD RAMPART
(KHEETSIK)
SHUMAN HOUSE
(K'AIIROONDAK)
JOE WARD'S CAMP
CHANDALAR RIVER
MARTEN CREEK
CHRISTIAN RIVER
WHITE EYE
FISH CAMP
CHALKYITSIK
(JALGIITSIK)
BLACK RIVER
SALMON RIVER
FORT YUKON
(GWICHYAA ZHEE)
SUCKER RIVER
YUKON RIVER
LITTLE BLACK RIVER
BIRCH CREEK
BIRCH CREEK
CIRCLE
0
10
20 miles

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INTRODUCTION

Belle Herbert is a Gwich'in Athabaskan woman who lives in the village of Chalkyitsik, Alaska, on the Black River. She has lived in this region all her very long life. According to conflicting birth records, she is between 105 and 127 years old. Her son died in 1964 at the age of 68; so Belle may well have seen more than 120 springtimes. (Out of respect, people's Gwich'in names are rarely used in public context. People in the Yukon Flats refer to her as Belle, so that is how we will refer to her in this book.)

I lived in Fort Yukon for some years and often heard people mention Belle and her stories. In the fall of 1979, the Alaska Humanities Forum provided us with money to do a series of recordings with Belle telling her life story. I made several trips to Chalkyitsik to talk with her; the accounts in this book have been transcribed from the recordings of those meetings.

It has taken a number of people working on different segments of the project to produce this book. Alice Moses of Chalkyitsik acted as interpreter for Belle and me when the recordings were being made; it is she whom Belle addresses as "my grandchild" in the stories. Katherine Peter transcribed the Gwich'in texts from the tape recordings and translated the material. She also provided expert knowledge of the areas and events that Belle told about. Virginia Alexander of the Dinjii Zhuu Enjit Museum of Fort Yukon sponsored the project for Humanities Forum funding of the initial fieldwork. Mrs. Alexander has also been extremely helpful in providing historical background for the notes to each text. The Alaska Historical Commission provided funds for work on the text and the illustrations. Alaska Rural Community Action Project provided support for photographer Rob Stapleton. Air North contributed transportation to and from Chalkyitsik. The City of Fort Yukon provided additional support for the project. The Alaska Native Language Center contributed the editing, typesetting, and printing funds.

The accounts appear here with a minimum of editing, in the order Belle told them. The text is set up with the idea that there is more to telling a story than just the words and sentences. For instance, the places where a storyteller pauses while speaking are important in adding meaning and feeling. They set the pace of the story. The stories, in either language, should be read aloud. The reader should pause at the end of each line briefly, as if for a breath; when there is a wider break between lines, the pause should be longer. (In order to match the English and Gwich'in "paragraphs" it has been necessary to vary the width of some of these breaks; when there is a difference between the width of a break in the Gwich'in and the English, the shorter break is the correct one.) When one reads the text in this manner, one should be able to give the impression of a storyteller rather than a writer.

Technical Note

The Gwich'in and English "paragraphs" or "stanzas" are arranged parallel to each other. We have made an effort to have the English reflect the pause structure, phrase length, and grammar as well as the meaning of the Gwich'in original. The English version was written by Katherine Peter and Bill Pfisterer and rewritten by Jane McGary. Because word order in

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Athabaskan is different from word order in English sentences, facing lines do not always correspond in meaning, though they often do.

Gwich'in storytellers use many special words, such as *ree, zhyaa, gwizhrii, łii,* and *roo,* to express such things as the teller's attitude or her desire to call the listener's attention to something. English uses word order and stress (and punctuation in writing) to do these things, so these Gwich'in words do not always have word equivalents in the English translation.

Katherine Peter transcribed Belle's words just as she heard them. Like anyone speaking informally, Belle sometimes varied in her pronunciation of common words which may be said any of several ways in her language. The text reflects this; there are variant spellings of some frequently occurring words. This variation usually involves nasalization of vowels.

As anyone who speaks or studies Gwich'in knows, it is a tone language; that is, the pitch of the voice on certain syllables affects their meaning. Because the Gwich'in spelling system was designed for speakers of the language to use, and it was felt that speakers could automatically supply the correct tones as they read, this practical spelling system now in use does not show the tones with special marks (as is done in many Athabaskan tone languages). Anyone who does not speak Gwich'in, therefore, will have to refer to tape recordings of these texts before using them for studying the language. We regret that there were not sufficient funds and personnel to provide for tone analysis on the texts.

—Bill Pfisterer

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1 A Moose Hunt

Belle tells of a moose hunt she went on with her husband, Joe Herbert, when they were living at Shuman House. Joe Ward's place was about one mile upstream from Shuman House. Ellen was Ward's Athabaskan wife. Joe Ward, who came from England, arrived in the Porcupine country in 1911 and remained in Alaska until he died in the 1970s, aged over ninety.

"Chan hee dzat dinjik inchį' łii. Aaa! Yaa chan dinjik
inchį'
łii," vaihnyaa.

Googaa ree
łąą ree veechii t'iihnyaa kwaa k'it t'inchy'aa.

Yeendaa ahaa gaa khan yeetthan haazhii.

Yeekit van vee
tr'ał dok
dha'ąįį aii chan
nan ghoo ree
nan ghoo dha'ąįį kak dąąhdii.

Akwat dzaa gwa'an tr'ał tsal t'inchy'aa.

Aii dzat k'ii'an dzat shatth'an kak dhiidii ts'a ree
noiidii.

"Again a moose has slept here, it seems. Ah! a moose
slept right here,
it seems," I said to him.

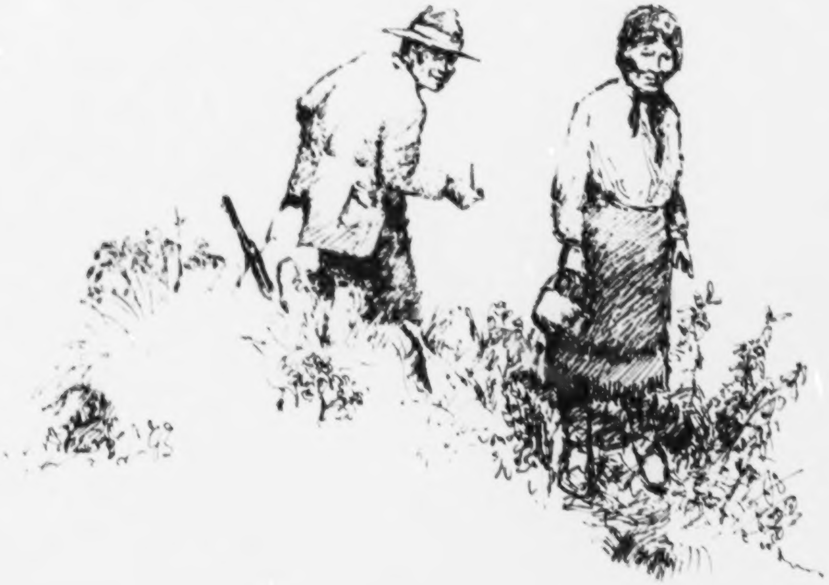
But even so
he didn't seem to listen to me.

As he was walking ahead, all of a sudden he went down.

Down by the lakeshore
a clump of willows
stood, and also
a mound of earth,
and on the mound he sat down.

Now there were little willows around there.

Where the willows ran out a ways, I crouched and
I sat down.



Aii k'aii tsal
yaagha'
khedi'
chųų kak t'inchy'aa. Aii kak dinjik ji' choo viki' googaa igweech'in kwaa.

Aiits'a'
zhat khik nagaazhrii ts'a'
dinjik ki' akhagoonyaa t'iginchy'aa nihthan roo.

Akwat ts'a' ree
googaa vadraii gihihkhii kwaa.

Yi'eedok hee gwiizhik gwaah'in.

Akwat ts'a'
ree
gohch'it it'ee łyaa ninghuk t'inchy'aa
yaaghat gohch'it ree niyiił'in.

Jyaa ts'a' shąąhjik
akwat ree zhat ree gwats'a' tth'eehaatthaii aiits'a' jyaa dahaazhik.

By the little willows
there
a little grass
was on the water. Atop that was a big moose horn,
but its head wasn't showing.

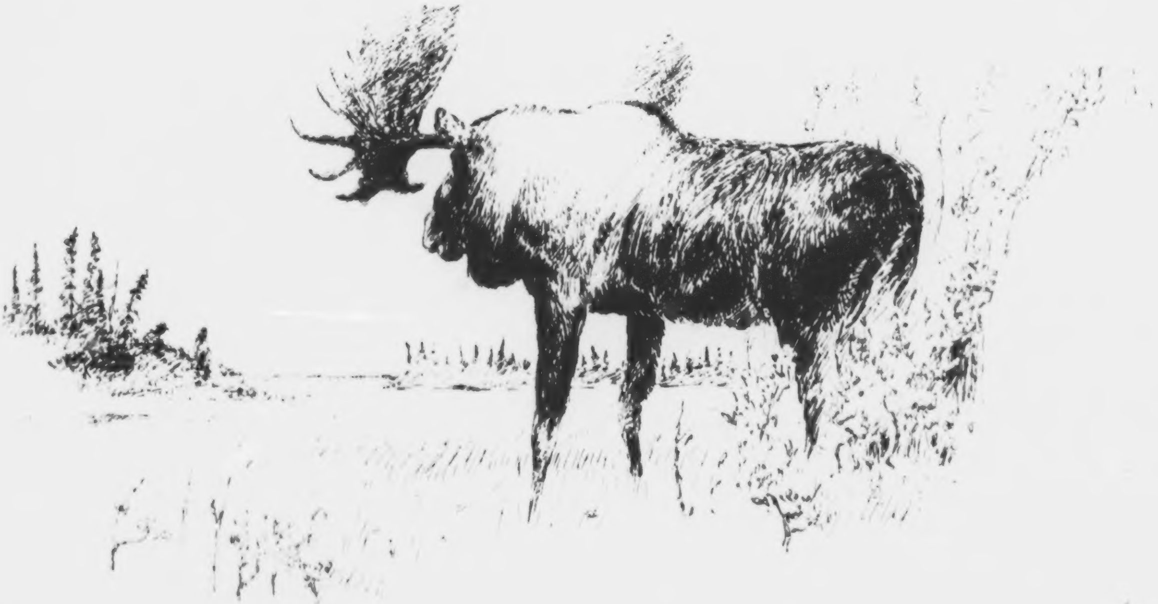
Well,
they always hunted around there and
I thought they had left the moose horn.

But
even so I didn't say anything to him.

He was just looking around up that way.

So then
you know
finally after a long time,
he finally saw that thing.

He touched me like this
and did like this, pointing his finger at it.



Aaa' ts'a' narol'in.	Ah, then we just waited.
Aiits'a' gohch'it dee jyaa ch'iji' choo jyaa dahaazhik.	And finally the big horns moved a little.
Aaa' ju' ju' jeiinchy'aa.	Ah, now!, now! it made a move and stopped.
Aiits'a' oondaa hiil'yuu ts'a' viki' khaiin'ee.	Then it stepped out and stuck its head out.
Akwat ree chan neenjik ch'ank'aa t'iizhik.	Then it slowly turned around again.
It'ee jyaa dahaazhik it'ee chų̨ų̨ t'ee.	Then it started to move in the water.
Akwat ts'a' ninghuk ch'oołk'įį.	Then it listened for a long time.
It'ee gwiizhik t'ee oozhee nan kak gogwaa'ee dzat gweendaa dink'ee niintin ts'a' it'ee tseet'it neehiiljit it'ee ts'eet'it ghat.	Meanwhile, kneeling on the ground up there, he held his gun at his side and reached in his pocket for his tobacco.
Yaagha' dinjik khadaghah'ee gwiizhik.	That moose stood up in front of us!
Aaa' jyaa diizhik ts'a' "Yeezhee dink'ee jyaa dahthan?" vaihnyaa.	Ah! when it did that, "How come you put your gun down?" I said to him.
Akwat t'ee shik'eegwahthat.	And then he listened to me.
Akwat t'ee łą̨ą̨ nagwarol'in videeghan khą̨įį'ee taahgoo k'it t'oonchy'aa it'ee "Akoh!" vaihnyaa.	Then we waited quite a while, and when its shoulders were sticking up, as if it were shallow water, then "Now!" I told him.
It'ee ree yaa chiltaa yet dinjik chų̨ų̨...	Then he shot it, the moose, in the water...
Yee'ok gwats'a' jyaa doonchy'aa yee'at gwats'a' oodak gwiheechy'aa gwats'a' ii'al.	We walked a little bit over that way and came out where we could see better.
Yeenjit dinjik diłk'ee nał'in dinchy'aa oondit deenin kyaachaa.	I had seen him shoot the moose, but then I saw it swimming across there.
"Yeendit k'iinin dinjik kyaachaa," vaihnyaa.	"The moose is swimming across," I told him.
It'ee chan ootthan tr'eetee tr'ih ootthan eenin dhii'oo.	So we went down that way, down to the canoe.
Aiits'a' t'ee oonin shineehilkwą̨įį.	Then he paddled with me across the lake.
Van kak niinghit.	It was a long way across the lake.
Aiits'a' ree yeendit ree oondee tr'ał eegoh'it jyaa dinchy'aa.	And then there was the moose, hidden in the willows.

Aiits'a' it'ee ch'adąį' dilk'ee googaa ree.	It had already been shot.
Akwat ts'a' k'iindak dzan troo gwachoo k'iindak teegoo'ee k'iindak shahkwaa gwiizhik khan hee jyaa diizhik tr'ih ndaa ineech'iintthaii.	And then right along where a big muskrat channel extended, along it he was paddling with me, and while the moose was doing this he pushed the canoe out.
It'ee k'iindak tr'ineezhii gwiizhik chan "Ooahk'ee," vaihnyaa ts'a' t'ee at'oohju' it'ee łyaa.	Then as it started to walk that way I said "Shoot it!" again and finally this time he really did it.
Aiits'a' vineegoh'it tr'ih naahkhaa.	And then he left the canoe behind.
Aii yank'ah yadhaa daa'aa yatth'an aii khan dhit'uu. Aii nakhwatr'ii eeneedhii'oo izhik hee izhik t'ee nidhiihaa.	He skinned half of it and cut the legs off. We went back to our canoe and camped right there.
Aaa! Izhik hee....	Ah! then....
Akwat t'ee nihkaa vanh it'ee tthak niyił'aa.	Well, the next morning he butchered it all.
Aiits'a' oonii neeyaazhik gwiizhik ookit drindigweedii izhik datthak shįį aii niihłii.	And while he was making trips over and back, I carried all the meat down the bank.
Akwat ts'a' t'ee it'ee tthak t'iyinlik.	And finally it was all done.
Akwat ts'a' chan oo'at teegohdįį chan izhik hee nineeshaachii ts'a' it'ee oo'ee niyiilii ts'a' akwat ts'a' chan yeetthan tł'eedik.	Then there was another portage; he took me over to it and he carried it back over and then took it down to the riverbank.
Eee! Gwintł'oo gwitr'it gwintsii gwadhaatsąįį.	Oh! we worked really hard together.
Aiits'a' khwąh chan iltsąįį.	And then he made a raft.
Izhik t'ee łyaa zhyaa dinęhdaa tr'igwindhat ts'a' t'iindhan łii ts'a' Ellen zhat t'ee iłtin łii.	Meanwhile Ellen and the others were thinking we had been gone a long time.
Akwat ree khwąh iłtsąįį aii yalat chan tr'ii inlii.	And so then he built the raft and on it he put some of the meat and put some in the canoe.
Aiits'a' aii jidii shih aii zhyaa chųų ghai' hee zhyaa nirinlii.	And also we just left some of the meat on shore.

Aiitł'ęę nihts'ii neeniikwąįį.

Aiits'a' Joe Ward vehzhee hee
teedhiikwąįį.

Aaa! Ellen tr'ikhidhazhaa.

Ts'a' Joe Ward aii chan launch
zhit t'eenakhwaahnąįį ts'a' zhik shih tthak haazhyaa.

It'ee kheegohojil łii
kheegohojil łii ts'a'
izhik hee Joe Ward shih ts'a' tr'ihchoo gihiiłnąįį.

Akoo aiits'a'
it'ee
eee' shitseii!
chan
hee it'ee yeedak nan kak ts'ąįį hee chan nahadhaazhrii.

Akwat ts'a'
izhik chan dinjik diłk'ee.

It'ee nan kak neehii'oo ts'a' ree
tsiik'it yeenjit gwiłtsąįį ts'a' ree
tthak gwizhit rinlii ts'a' t'ee
khaiits'a' tan tsal kak at'oohju' hee oodąą nirinlii.

Aii t'ee yaagha' Henry chan aii zhat khik diihaa t'inchy'aa roo khik.

Akwat it'ee jyaa dagwąhtsii ts'a'.

After that we paddled back down.

Then we landed
right at Joe Ward's place.

Ah! Ellen peeked at us over the bank.

And Joe Ward just threw us
in his launch with all the food.

It seems they had just come back,
they had just come back and
Joe Ward went up with his boat to get the rest of the meat.

And so
then,
oh, grandchild!
once again
we started hunting in that country again.

And soon
he shot another moose there.

We were going around on foot and
he made a ground cache and
we put it all in there and then
in fall when it was starting to freeze, we brought it back down.

At that time Henry always stayed with us.

That's all I'm going to say.

2 Life in the old days; skin tents and clothing

Belle mentions the skin tent (described more fully in text 13); it was made from a framework of bent willow or spruce poles rested against two parallel crossbeams that in turn rested on supports, making a dome-shaped frame. This was covered with a number of caribou skins sewn together. (See Robert McKennan, ***The Chandalar Kutchin,*** Arctic Institute of North America Technical Paper No. 17, 1965.) The method of cooking used in the old days is described more in text 24. Text 7 has a more detailed description of traditional clothing.

Akwat ts’a’ chan gwintsal deenaadąį’ dinjii zhuu ohotł’įį izhik gwik’it chan gwintsal.	Now I’ll talk a little about how the people in the old days used to dress.
Eee dinjii gwintł’oo gwitr’it t’agwah’in kwaa t’igwinyaa.	Oh, men don’t work very hard.
Dinjii zhuu!	Men!
Tr’injaa zhrii gwintł’oo gwitr’it t’agwah’in.	Only women work hard.
Akwat aii niivyaa chan yeedok haa’ee aii k’it t’inchy’aa ten t’ee t’igilik t’agoorahnyaa.	Now on that skin house frame there were ridgepoles, ten of them spaced around the bottom.
Nehdok dachan ts’ik haa’ee.	Like those roof poles up there.
Aiits’a’ ch’ihłak chan oodok t’inchy’aa.	And there was one more up there.
Aiits’a’ niivyaa choo chan dazhoo nilįį t’arahnyaa aii niivyaa.	And that big skin tent was covered with hides with the hair on.
Aii jyaa dagah’in izhik yeedąą ts’ąįį jyaa dineegiyilik ts’a’ vał kak.	They could fold the skin in half once and carry it on the toboggan.
Aiits’a’ dachan nihts’ii oondaa viki’ chan jeiinchy’aa oondaa vitł’i’ chan jeiinchy’aa dachan ji’ vaa zhee goo’ąįį.	And then there were logs on each side one at the head and one like this at the back, and with the logs the house stood up.

Akwat ts'a'
aii tthak k'iindaa haa'ee ts'a'
tły'ah tsal haa dangiyahchaa.

Zhik k'iidak t'inchy'aa aii tthak chan
niivyaa chan agahchaa.

It'ee niivyaa gwakak deegahchaa.

Aiits'a' oodok chan
jyaa doonchy'aa izhik oondaa gwaak'a'
nihts'ii dachan niriichik aii kak
deełuuradhak
aii kiit'ik it'ee tr'igwiiłk'a' t'igwinyaa.

Aiits'a' oodok
haa'ee
tr'ahtsii aii
ch'iitsii ts'ik chan dee deegwits'iichy'aa li'.

Dzaa chan dachan
dachan zhrah
jał aii tły'aa giyiłchaa oodee
aii haa tyąh
veedzaarii'ak ts'a' oozhee gwaak'a'
gwakak ree.

And then
all the poles extended to that point
and were tied together with a little rope.

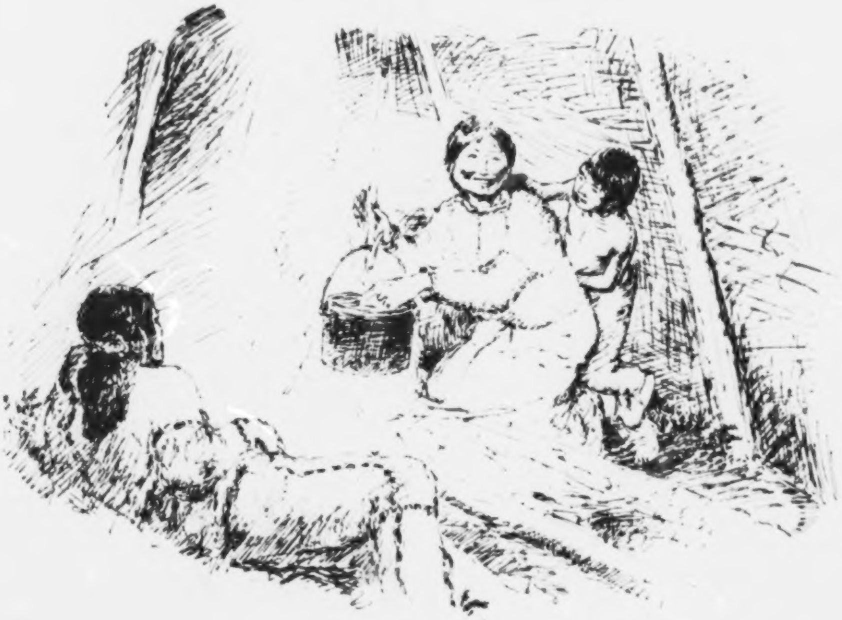
And the skin was tied to that also.

They tied the skin over the frame.

And out in the middle
right in front of you was a fireplace,
two poles on each side with dirt piled
in between,
and we built the fire on top of that.

And above the fireplace,
where
we made it, there
was a narrow iron pole—I wonder where
it came from?

To this,
a wooden hook,
a hook was tied with rope up there,
and on that
we hung a pot, right above
the fireplace.



Akwat
aii tr'injaa nąįį chan
dazhoo thal chan zhit gaa'yuu.

Dazhoo ik chan nagaatsuu.
Akwat dazhoo
dzirh
vidi' neehotthak chan
zhit giiljik.

. . . .

Tr'ookit val ch'agahchaa.

Tr'iinin nąįį neegitł'uk tł'ee val ch'agahchaa ts'a'
tr'iinin natsal nąįį
aii vał kak.

Akwat tr'iinin shriit'ąhtsii nąįį oondaa gahadal.

Akwat zhik
tr'injaa nąįį
gwach'aa
zhik t'inchy'aa kwaii haa tthak
dachan kwaii haa
tthak val gahchaa.

Then
the women
wore fur pants, too.

They wore fur parkas too.

And fur
mittens
with fringes around the top,
they wore also.

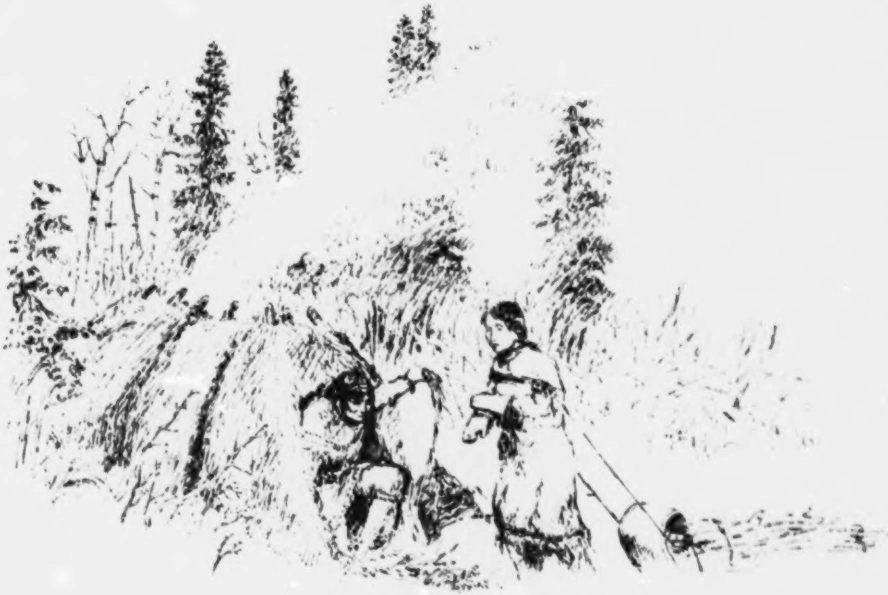
. . . .

First they tied their stuff to the sled.

They dressed the children and after they tied the stuff on the sled,
the little kids sat on the sled load.

And the bigger kids walked ahead.

And then
the women
took their belongings,
everything they had,
even the tent poles,
and tied it on the toboggan.



Geetee łąįį neekwąįį geetee łąįį tik, geetee łąįį neekwąįį geetee łąįį tik.	Sometimes there were two dogs, sometimes three, sometimes two dogs, sometimes three.
Aii t'ee dachaaval eenjit t'agąąhchy'aa t'ee aii googaa ndaa googąąhjik.	Even though they had dogs to pull, they still had to push the sled too.
K'iighai' ch'igeelil.	And that's how they traveled with sleds.
Akwat t'ee oondaa niginjik.	And so they got to their campsite.
Dinjii vanh dąį' tǫǫ hee dinjii hadal.	The men left in the morning while it was still dark.
Duuyee tr'injaa ts'a' tr'iginjii.	They never helped the women.
Tr'iinin geetak hee aghwaa googaa akwat ts'a' oondaa niginjik.	Even if they were packing babies, the women would set up the tent.
Aii khazhaagighit.	They dug the snow out.
Khazhaagighit niivyaa chanh gwa'an giitthaii ts'a' it'ee niivyaa jyaa digilik.	They dug the snow out, set up the circle of tent poles, and put the skin covering on it.
Aiits'a' yee'at ditły'aa ch'agahval ts'a' oondaa kik dachan t'inchy'aa aii oo'ok hąąghǫǫ vaghat kak luu aii keegii'in aii gwideetak t'igilik.	After that they strung the ropes and went out, looking for a fallen tree with dirt on the stump; they used the dirt to make the fireplace.
Akwat ts'a' gogwaahk'ik gwatsal gwiizhik it'ee tr'iinin nąįį gwach'aa tł'ik haa nihdeegahahdal.	Then after they got a little fire going, the children brought in old clothes to spread around the fire.
It'ee chan yee'at traa chan oodok khagikyaa oonaa neegaazhik tr'iinin aghwaa ji' googaa.	Then again they went out and chopped wood and packed it in, even if they were packing babies.
Akwat ts'a' aii...jyaa dąhjyaa ts'a' giik'eech'iikyaa.	They chopped it about this long.
Aii yeendaa aii t'ee gaahk'ik jyaa t'inchy'aa gahtsik.	And then they made a fire with it, that's how they did it.
Aii gwiizhik t'ee nihdeegadal.	The~~n they~~ all came in.
Chan hee dinjii geegoolii khat chan chan hee yeendaa deetyąą ga'ąįį.	They expected the men soon, so they put food in the pot on the fire.
Akwat ts'a' shih....	Then food....
Akwat ts'a' lidii chan lee haagwiindaii.	Then we didn't even know about tea.

Akwat ts'a' ree dinjii ineedal geedąhzhrii jyaa doonchy'aa ts'a' gwiin'e' t'aragwahnyaa.	And then the men came, only then, that's the way things used to be.
Aaa! łyaa gwintł'oo tr'injaa nąįį eets'agwagwadąąhjik t'agoorahnyaa.	Ah! They really made the women suffer back then.
Geetak hee ch'araahk'ee łii hee it'ee ree neekhwaaraadaa gwinyaa haa tr'iinin nąįį nihdeezhahkaa.	Sometimes they might kill something and when they came back with packs, the kids ran in noisily.
Akwat geetak hee ch'agaahkhwąįį kwaa.	Sometimes they didn't kill anything.
Jyaa digii'in aii shih keegii'in gook'įį zhyaa tr'injaa nąįį khats'ahgwaajik t'igwinyaa.	That's how they occupied themselves, hunting for food, while the women did all the camp work.
Gwintł'oo zhyaa neeshreegwaahchy'aa.	We were really poor.
Duuyee dohshroo tsal gwits'eech'in dazhoo zhrii.	There wasn't a scrap of cloth around, only fur.
Akwat jyaa doonchy'aa ts'a' gwintł'oo neeshreegwaahchy'aa gwin'e' t'igwinyaa.	And that's how it was, really, we were poor in those days.

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3 Life in the old days; hunting

Belle talks about food in the old days, before trade goods arrived; the kinds of arrowheads that were used (discussed more in text 15); and the use of the deadfall trap. She mentions several gold strikes, which can be dated as follows: Dawson, 1897; Circle, 1893; Tanana, 1902; and Talkeetna, 1906. The bows people used in the old days were longbows, made of birch, with strings of twisted sinew. The wide-headed arrows were originally tipped with stone, but in Belle's day probably with iron acquired through trade. The bone-headed arrows she describes had two parallel points. The deadfall Belle mentions is apparently the kind used for small game, in which a single log was placed to fall on the animal which took the bait; there was another kind used for large animals, in which a whole platform of logs fell on the animal.

Alice: Jidii lidii eenjit t'eegaahchy'aa shih chų' dohłii?	*Alice:* What did they use for tea?
Shih tsal ga'aa aiits'a' giichų' zhrii.	They ate a little meat and then just drank the broth.
Jidii geeghaii giheenjyaa goo' łi'haa neeshreegwaahchy'aa gwin'e' t'igwinyaa.	What else could they drink, when people were so poor in those days?
Vaanoodlit chan haagwiindaii kwaa roo.	We didn't even know about white men.
Shįį googaa vaanoodlit dzat gwee'an tthak goodlit t'oonchy'aa.	I myself saw when the first white men came around here.
Yeenjit Old Rampart garahnyaa izhik gwizhrii chan Ginkhii Khehkwaii haa indi' gwinyaa gwizhrii tr'igwiitth'ak.	Up there where they call Old Rampart, there was only a priest, and a chief stayed there, that's all we heard.
Akwat ts'a' ninghit gwa'an yeenji' Dawson kwat chan gwats'at tr'ideegwaatth'at t'oonchy'aa.	And far away, we heard there was a settlement at Dawson.
Yee'at gidinjii inlii Tanan aii chan shandaa.	And Tanan (Fairbanks) where all the people go, it came into existence in my lifetime.
Vijuu gwanaa hee aii t'ee nagwaatth'at t'oonchy'aa.	It was not too long ago that it was established.
Yeedi' Tanana laraa agwarąh'ąįį gwinyaa t'ee khąįįkǫǫ aii t'ee Talkeetna gagahnyaa izhik izhik chan t'ee shandaa.	And when they struck gold down in Tanana, that was the last (gold strike), I think they call it Talkeetna, that too happened in my lifetime.

Dawson Circle haa ch'aragwąh'ąįį aii tł'ee hee yeedit chan ch'aragwąh'ąįį t'igwinyaa.	In Dawson and in Circle they struck gold, and after that, they struck gold down river there.
Akwat aii Dawson ch'aragwąh'ąįį gwats'an it'ee izhik gwats'an at'oohju' hee vaanoodlit tr'ąąh'in t'oonchy'aa.	And the Dawson gold strike, from that time on we began to see white men.
Akwat ts'at yeenjik Circle ch'aragwąh'ąįį gwats'an it'ee steamboat goodlit.	And after they struck gold in Circle, the steamboat started.
At'oohju' hee vaanoodlit nąįį gwanlįį tr'agwąąh'in gǫǫ kwaa tr'agwaah'in.	From that time on, we saw a lot of white men, though we didn't see them all the time.
Ninghuk kwaa gwanaa vijuu gwanaa gwats'an t'ee store nigwiinjil gǫǫ.	It hasn't been too long that they've had stores around here.
Aii gwats'a' geetak vaanoodlit tr'ąąh'in.	But we sometimes saw white men before that time.
Yeedit ...ch'aragwąh'ąįį gwats'an izhik it'ee gwats'an łi'haa vaanoodlit nąįį goodlit t'oonchy'aa.	When they struck gold downriver, that was when the white men started coming around.
Akwat łi'haa łi'haa neeshreegwaahchy'aa.	At that time, we were really poor.
Tr'agwandaii akhai' nehduk hee diilak nąįį diik'ąąhtii geh'an ...diihaa goodlii t'oonchy'aa.	But we survived out here, our families would take care of us, so we had things.
Akwat łi'haa łi'haa neeshreegwaahchy'aa t'oonchy'aa.	But we were really very poor then.
Alice: Aii k'eejit dąį' deenaadąį' geegwandak aii nats'ahts'a' nin tsal kwaii gaghan.	*Alice:* You were just talking about the old days; tell us how they killed small game then.
K'i' haa zhree aii k'i' haa t'ee dinjik googaa tr'aghan gǫǫ.	With arrows, we even killed moose with arrows.
Aaa! shitseii aii k'i' vitsįį shrii chyaa gwich'in vitsįį dhidlii t'arahnyaa.	Oh, grandchild! those arrows had sharp heads as wide as knives.
Aii t'ee dinjii nint'aii aii ree yigee hee jyaa diyilik.	And a strong man would hit it right under the foreleg.

Akwat ts'a' zhik gwa'an geh
eenjit chan tał
tth'an tał tr'ahtsii t'igwinyaa.

Akwat
shin hee chan
k'i'
jidii k'i'
tth'an ts'ik
tth'an ts'ik
gaghan aii
jyaa geetak hee t'inchy'aa.

Nihghǫǫ kho'ee ts'a' k'i' tsįį dhidlii.

Aii t'ee dats'an eenjit ree
dats'an needaa googaa nanrahdak gwinyaa gwąąh'in?

Izhik gwanaa t'ee gwandaa ts'a'
gwinzįį juk zhyaa dink'ee k'i' haa zhyaa t'igwii'in t'oonchy'aa roo.

Aii k'i'
vitsįį shrii choo
shrii jyaa dąhjyaa ree chy'aa
aii
vatł'ąįį gwanlįį t'ee.

Aii haa
dinjik gaahkhwąįį.

And also, for rabbits,
they made
small bone arrowheads.

Then
in the summer
the arrows,
there were arrows
with narrow,
narrow bone heads,
they made those
that way sometimes.

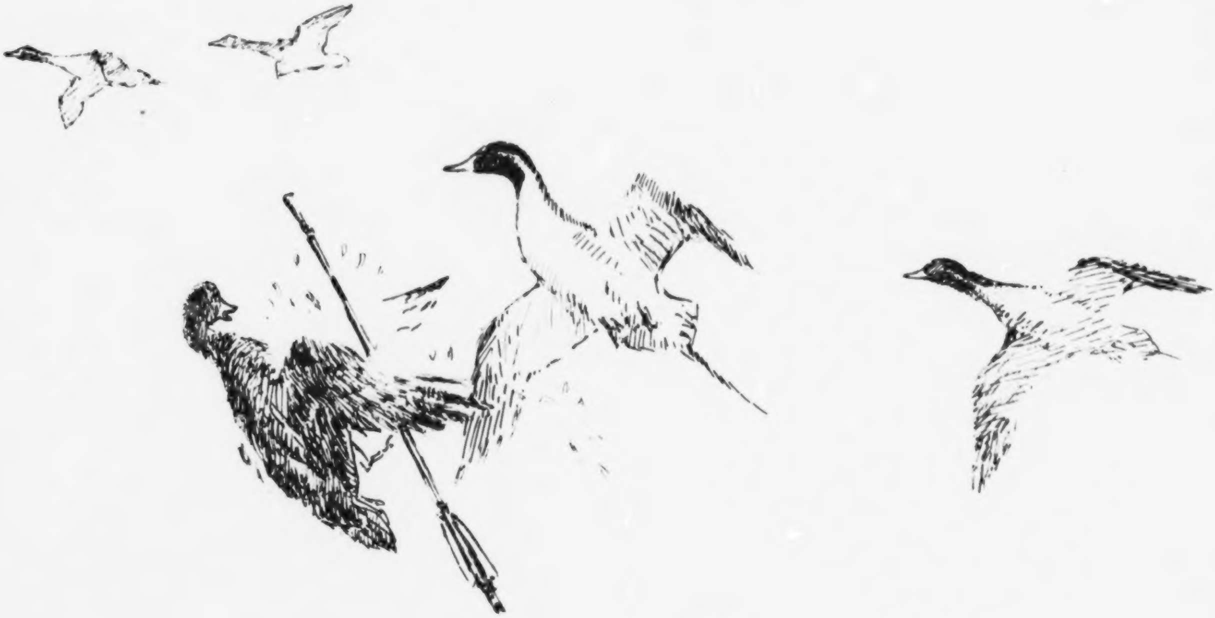
They put them side by side at the tip of the arrow.

They used that for ducks;
you know they even shot down flying ducks?

In those days that was very well,
but now we just use shells.

Those arrowheads
that were like knives,
they were as big as knives and
they
were saw-toothed on the edge.

With those
they killed moose.



Akwat ts'a'
khyąh haa
googaa chan
dachan khyąą
dachan khyąą
aii chan dinjii
t'ąąhchy'aa t'oonchy'aa.

Dachan khyąą tr'ichik
aii ree
dachan neekwąįį nihgharoiitthak
dachan neekwąįį nihgharoiitthak
dachan deetak t'arah'in.

Akwat ts'a' k'ii'ee
dachan choo jyaa darah'in vakak deereedii.

Aii vakak dak giyuun'ee
gweenji' dachan jeiinchy'aa kak
zhik k'ii'an t'inchy'aa goon'ee
oonji'
nin ghat oonjit
shih tsal gąąhtsit
aii oonjii akhai' ree vak'aa gwadąąhthak.

Jyaa dii'in aii k'iighai'
nin tsal kwat goonili' t'agoorahnyaa.

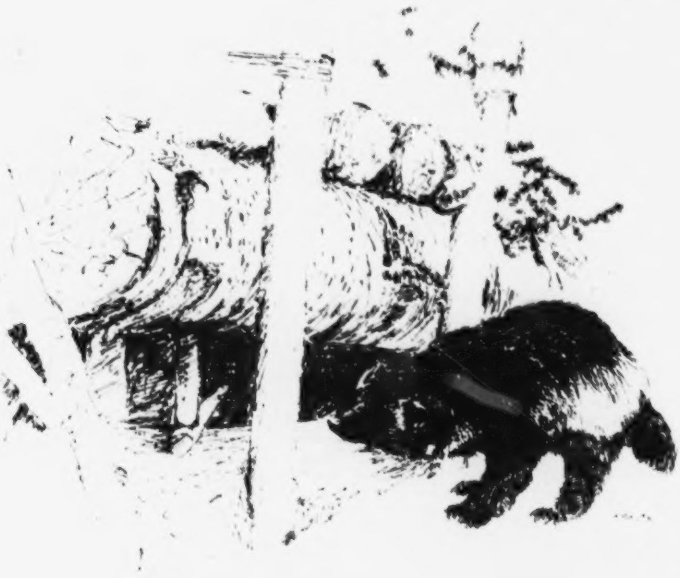
At that time
there were no traps;
but there were
wooden traps,
deadfalls,
that people
used to use.

They set wooden traps:
for them
they put two logs side by side,
they put two logs side by side,
and put the bait way back in.

Then they set another stick
upon it, pointing off this way.

There were sticks extending up and down
  on it,
and a stick going this way,
and on the stick that was above,
up there
when the animal went in
and grabbed the bait,
the whole thing fell right on the animal.

And that is how
they used to trap small game.



Shitseii łi'haa yeenaa
gogwąąhtł'oo gwin'e'
gaa nihk'it t'igwiichy'aa ts'a'
juk gweendaa zhyaa dinjii ts'igwii'ee
  k'it'oonchy'aa
t'oonchy'aa nahąą.

Gwintł'oo
tr'ookit
gwintł'oo tr'ookit
vaanoodlit
danaa giinghaa
gwat'arahaahchy'aa gwizhrįį gwigweech'in
  gwizhrįį.

Ts'a' k'eiich'ii khan goodlit kwaa
  t'oonchy'aa.

Akwat tth'aii hee
diinlat nąįį akoodiheechy'aa gaa
tr'ikhit laraa diits'a' t'arah'in roo.

Aaha' akoh shitseii.

My grandchild, long ago
they were really strong working that way,
that's how it was, but
nowadays people are not so strong,
you see.

Really,
at first,
at the very first
when the white men
came to us,
it looked like we would need help from
  them.

And things didn't start coming quickly.

Some of us would still
be living in poverty today, but
people keep sending us money!

Yes, that's enough, my grandchild.

4 Traveling as a child

Asked to talk about her childhood, Belle tells about a difficult journey their fatherless family made when Belle's mother was suffering from a serious eye problem. Belle may have been eleven or twelve at the time. She guided her mother by holding one end of her mother's cane, and steadied the dog-drawn toboggan with her other hand. After spending the summer fishing with relatives, the family went to Fort Yukon, where they spent the winter and helped nurse the famous Ch'eeghwałti' during his final days. Ch'eeghwałti', who has become well known in Gwich'in oral tradition, came from Canada. His son Roderick brought him to Fort Yukon on a hunting trip. The old man's illness prevented them from returning to Canada, where the women of his own family could have nursed him. People at Fort Yukon remember that he died before 1900, but because pre-1900 church records are not available, we have not been able to date his death precisely. Roderick had three daughters; his grandson Richard that Belle mentions is Richard Martin. The son of Ch'aadzahti' mentioned is Gabriel John, who died in 1960; we have not been able to find out the exact date of Ch'aadzahti''s death. The earliest gold strikes in the Circle area were in 1893.

Alice: Ch'adąį' gwanaa ohtsal hee nahan vaa dook'įį dąį' chan geegwandak nahnyaa.	*Alice:* He says to tell about the old times when you were small, living with your mother.
Akwat chan ni'ęę ni'ęę dik'idanąhjik ts'a' gwitr'it gwatsal tr'igwii'įį dąį' gwatsal.	Well, my mother my mother raised us and we had little chores to do, just a little.
Nakhwaa vindee kwaa nagwaanaii izhik geevaagwahaldak.	I'll tell you about when my mother became blind.
Akwat shitseii ni'ęę zhrii diik'ąąhtii.	Well, grandchild, only my mother was taking care of us.
Shachaa dǫǫ nąįį shįį nąįį haa ni'ęę chan shoondee sheejii haa oo'ok t'iginchy'aa.	I had four younger brothers and myself, and my mother; My older brother and older sister were living out somewhere else.
Aii gwiizhik t'ee ni'ęę vindee gwiłts'ik nagwaanąįį.	And at that time my mother's eyes were sore.
Akwat googaa t'ee yeendit Gwichy'aa Zhee k'iinin tr'ahaandii.	Even so, we went across that way, out from Fort Yukon.

Aiits'a' oondit ddhah
aii yeenjit Circle
k'iinji' nahąą.

Izhik k'iinji' khaii tthak
it'ee Circle
ch'aragwąh'ąįį
izhik
tr'ookit kwaiik'it nagwahaatth'aa izhik
izhik gwiizhik.

Aiits'a' izhik k'iinji' ts'a' yaagha'
Hot Spring
izhik
k'eeriidal.

Akwat ts'a' yeenjit Circle gehnjit hee
izhik hee gwigwigwiiłkįį t'agoorahnyaa
izhik deetthan hee.

Eee!
aii ree
tr'iinin tik
tr'iinin dǫǫ nąįį
k'aałtii gwiizhik ni'ęę chan vak'aałtii.

Łąįį neekwąįį zhrii tr'ii'įį.

Now you know the mountains
that extend over toward
Circle.

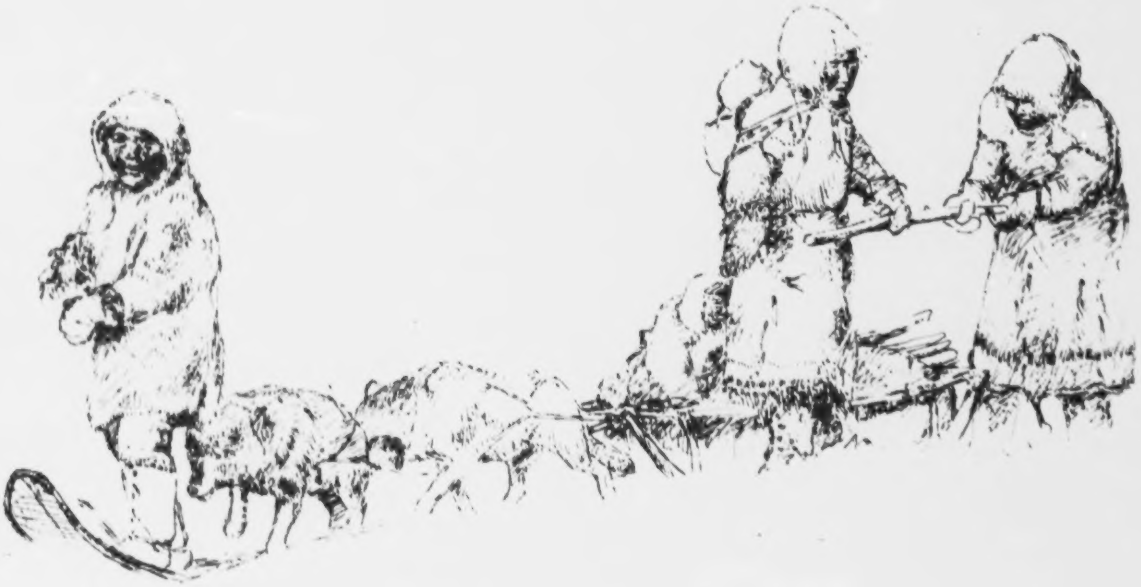
Up that way, all winter...
that's when
they struck gold at Circle,
then
a village first started there,
at that time.

Anyway, right up that way
to the Hot Spring
there
we came.

And down that way toward Circle
people said they were staking claims
up above there.

Oh!
there were
three kids—
four kids—
I was taking care of, and I was taking
care of my mother too.

We only had two dogs.



Akwat izhik gał vantł’ał’ee gwiizhik dachąąval chan ishriidhałjik.	Then I held onto my mother’s stick with one hand, and the toboggan with the other hand.
Akwat ts’a’ it’ee oonjit kiriinjil gwats’an it’ee yeenii chan sheejii nąįį neegeedaa gwinyaa izhik ts’ąįį chan hoiizhii.	And then we got up to the river, and when we got to the Yukon, we heard my older sister’s family were coming down.
Izhik t’ee sheejii nąįį teegohojil izhik gavaa teedhiishizhii.	So I went to meet them and came down with them.
. . . .	
Izhik gwats’an ni’ęę vindee gwinghyaa ts’a’ gwintsal veenjit gwinzįį.	From then on, it was warmer and my mother’s eyes got a little better.
Akwat shitseii izhik dąį’ nachoaahąįį.	Well, grandchild, at that time it flooded.
Datthak gwak’at tąąhąįį ts’ivii choo googaa.	It flooded all over, even over the big spruce trees.
Khaiinjii ehdak tr’iteedąąhnąįį t’igwinyaa.	Almost everything was under water.
Tr’ihchoo neekwąįį zhrii aii vizhit tr’adąągwat.	There were only two boats, and we were all crowded in there.
Akwat izhik gwiizhik hee neegwigwilii.	So then we took our stuff across.
It’ee nihts’ineeriijil.	We took off downriver.
Izhik it’ee yaaghat t’ee Circle hee ni’ęę shee’ii William Pilot vitr’injaa aii łuk t’aa’in izhik niinzhii ts’a’ izhik hee tseerąązhii.	Then there near Circle my mother stayed with my uncle William Pilot’s wife, working on fish there, and we stayed around there.
Akwat ts’a’ łuk dizhiijyaa aii nih’an goonjii ts’a’ gwintsal łuk shriit’agwąhtsii goonjik.	After that they divided up the fish they had caught and they had caught quite a few fish.
Aii shin tthak ree.	We did that all that summer.
Akwat ts’a’ khaiits’a’ tǫǫ nagwaatth’at.	Then fall came and it got dark.
Tǫǫ neegwaatth’ak it’ee teenizhrii heedaa nigwiindhat ni’ęę k’ii tr’ihchoo zhrii di’įį.	It was getting dark but the ice had not started to run yet, and my mother had only a birchbark canoe.

Aiits'a' t'ee yaagha'
Charlie Johnson vanandaii
aii viti'. . .tr'injaa noonjik aii.

Aii t'ee
oonii
neegeedaa łii
va'at tth'aii gwandaii hee.

Akwat ts'a' yaaghat Gwichyaa Zhee gehjit
Seventeen Mile gwinyaa gwiintth'ak
izhik t'ee teeraajil.

Nizhrii daahgwat nigweedhaa.

Akwat ts'a'
ni'ęę k'ii tr'ihchoo di'įį.

Aiits'a'
izhik aii shitii
tsiik'it gwiłtsąįį.

Aiits'a' aii łuk tsal t'eedaraa'in diik'eiich'i'
tsal kwaii haa tthak
jyaa dirinlik.

Aiits'a' t'ee nihts'ineetr'ihchoorąąhłit.

It'ee Gwichyaa Zhee gwats'a' chan tǫǫ nagwaanąįį.

Googaa Gwichyaa Zhee
gwats'a' ts'ąįį
ts'ąįį tr'ihchoo tr'ahahłaa
aii shitii tr'ihchoo tsal di'įį
aii ree.

Tǫǫ hee t'ee Gwichyaa Zhee
aiits'a' shoondee
aii dachan tły'ah ninjyaa ts'įį
dachan giriłchaa oondak teerąąghoo gaa yaaghat gwandak hee t'igwii'in.

Gohch'it dee tły'aa goonjik.

Izhik
izhik gwiizhik t'ee yeenjik
Ch'eeghwałti' gwinyaa gwiintth'ak.

Aii dyąąhch'i' t'ee dzaa teeriłchįį łii t'ee.

And you remember that
Charlie Johnson?—
His father remarried then.

And then
those people were coming down
so it seems,
while his wife was still living.

Well then, east of Fort Yukon,
at Seventeen Mile—you heard of it—
we stopped there.

Slush was beginning to come down the river.

Well,
my mother had a birchbark canoe.

So
right there my uncle
made an underground cache.

And we took the fish and our other little stuff,
and put all of it
in there.

And then we took off on the river with boats.

Before we got to Fort Yukon it got dark.

Even so, we went to the Fort Yukon
side,
following the bank with the boat;
my uncle had a little boat,
you see.

In the darkness we got to Fort Yukon,
and my older brother
took a long rope and
tied it to a stick and threw it to the bank, but he didn't hit the bank with it.

Finally they got hold of the rope.

Now,
along about that time it happened—
you've heard of Ch'eeghwałti'.

It seems they had brought the old man down.

Gwintł'oo nan kak dazhan ghat gwintsii veegwaa'ąįį chy'aa gwintł'oo tr'iijii yak'aahtii t'arahnyaa.	He was very well known as a medicine man, and there was no one to take care of him.
Aiits'a' ni'ęę chan ree zhyaa yak'ąąhtii.	So my mother took care of him.
Aii t'ee ree oodit Roderick gwinyaa gwiintth'ak.	And also, have you heard of Roderick?
Yaaghat t'ee Richard gooti' aii vahan viti' t'ee Roderick oozhii.	Now that Richard, their father, his mother's father was called Roderick.
Aii dzat teeriłchįį izhik khaii t'ee niindhat.	Well, they brought him (Ch'eeghwałti') down, and he died that winter.
Izhik khaii chan yaa Gabriel dzaa gwa'an gwinch'i'.	That same winter that Gabriel used to live around here.
Aii viti' tr'iiłk'ee gwinyaa izhik khaii chan t'ee viti' tr'iiłk'ee t'arahnyaa.	Somebody shot his father, we heard; that winter somebody shot his father.
Izhik izhik gwiizhik tł'ęę hee khaii gwiindhat.	Then after a while, that winter passed.
Dąįį neegwilgǫ' June nan gwandaa t'ee tr'injaa dhiidlit roo.	The spring thaw came, and in June I became a woman.
Akwat ts'a' aii gwintł'oo ni'ęę vindee neeshreegwaahchy'aa.	Now then my mother's eyes were really bad.
Akwat ts'a' oodi' teetsii k'iidi' shaaghan oodįį zhat khadhizhii.	And so then from far downriver the old woman came up the river.
Aii t'ee yindee shrigwilii haa gohch'it zhyaa nizįį yiłtsąįį k'it t'inchy'aa. Geh'an ch'anjaa nilįį ts'a' gwinzįį vaagweech'in roo.	And she fixed her eyes and finally it seemed she had made them well. That's why even when she was old, she could still see good.
Eee! it'ee shitseii.	Oh! that's enough now, grandchild.

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5 Traveling in the Porcupine Country

The events in this account must have taken place during Belle's early married years. She describes a series of places she and her husband and his relatives lived: from Fort Yukon they went to the headwaters of the Black River, where they hunted for the winter. Then they came downriver, perhaps all the way to Fort Yukon, where they found an epidemic raging. This may have been the diphtheria epidemic that carried off a great number of the children of that area just after 1900. They moved to Old Rampart and stayed for a long time then moved first to John Herbert's place on the Porcupine above Shuman House, and then to Graphite. They lived off and on at Shuman House, then moved to Chalkyitsik, where Joe Herbert became a leader in the effort to establish a permanent village with a school and church. Most Interior Alaska villages of today became permanent population centers when people settled there to take advantage of schools, churches, and trading posts.

Alice: Intsal gwanaa din'inghit geegwandak izhik tth'aii hee geegwandak nagoonyaa.	*Alice:* They want you to talk some more about when you were growing up.
Akwat izhik łyaa ganaldaii kwaa.	That I don't remember.
Chiitee ihłįį hee łyaa neeshraałchy'aa dąį' aii gwizhrii.	When I was an orphan, I was really poor, that's all.
Akwat ts'a' aii googaa tthak gineedhaldee k'it t'ishizhik. Ts'a' akwat łyaa zhyaa k'eejit ihłįį geegwaldak t'iihnyaa roo.	Now all of that just seems like I've forgotten. So I'm telling now about when I was really young.
Ch'anjaa ihłįį izhik geegwaldak t'iihnyaa kwaa juk khaii.	I wasn't telling about when I was old this winter.
It'ee łyaa tr'iinin k'it sheegoo'ąįį juk t'ee geegwahaldak t'oonchy'aa.	I was like a kid, that's what I'm going to tell about now.
Datthak k'eejit ihłįį łyaa zhyaa k'eejit ihłįį hee zhyaa at'oohju' niidhat gwanaa geegwaldak t'iihnyaa.	All the time I was young, when I was just really young, that's what I'll tell you about right now.
Akwat t'ee gwandak tik t'ee eegwahaldak ree.	Now then, I told three stories.

Aiits'a' łyaa k'eejit ihłįį
akǫǫ
tr'iinin ihłįį
łąą ganaldaii kwaa roo.

Aiits'a'
it'ee gwats'at ganaldaii izhik gwats'an
gwahaldak t'oonchy'aa juk.

Dzaa
yeedit tr'igwich'į' gwats'at t'ee Draanjik
gwats'a' tthak tr'ahaajil.

Dinjii datthak
akwat ts'a' datthak Draanjik oondak
Draatł'it
gwats'a' tr'ahaajil.

Aii
dįhch'i' nąįį googaa.

Akwat ts'a' khaii oondok gwiindhat.

Oondok khaii gwiindhat.

Aii gwats'at
gwiłgǫ' ts'a' tr'ihchoo haa tr'ineeriijil.

Tr'ihchoo haa tr'ineeriijil ts'a'
oodit teeraajil.

Shitseii, gwiizhik
it'ee tthak
dinjii iłts'ik.

Dinjii tthak iłts'ik ts'a'
tr'iinin nąįį zhrii ehłik t'ee.

Akwat ts'a' shitseii, aii gwats'at t'ee yeenji'
Old Rampart gwats'a' hee tr'ahaajil
izhik hee tr'igwich'įį.

Aiits'a'
izhik hee tr'igwich'įį ts'a'
łyaa niinghuk
izhik tr'igwich'įį.

Aii gwats'at tr'eeriijil ts'a'
yaa gehjųų
John Herbert vanahkak
izhik chan niinghuk
tr'igwich'įį.

Gwats'at chan
yaaghat Grafy
izhik chan
izhik chan niinghuk tr'igwich'įį.

But about when I was really young,
now,
when I was a child,
I really don't remember that!

And so
I'll tell about from the time I do remember.

There,
we were living down (at Fort Yukon), and
from there we traveled to Black River.

All the people
traveled to the headwaters
of the Black River.

Even
the old men.

And we stayed there all winter.

The whole winter.

And when
the snow melted, we came down in a boat.

We came down in a boat and
stopped down there.

Grandchild, at that time
all
the people were sick.

All the people were sick, but
only the children died off.

So, grandchild, from there we went up
to Old Rampart,
and we lived there.

And then
we lived there,
for quite a long time
we lived there.

We left there and
farther down
was John Herbert's place,
and we stayed there
for a long time too.

Then from there
we moved down to Graphite
and we lived there
for a long time.

Aaa!	Ah!
Shitseii, izhik it'ee vadzaih oondak oondak ddhah kak vadzaih keeriidal.	Grandchild, then from there we went up after caribou, we hunted caribou in the mountains.
Akwat ts'a' gohch'it geełeerahoojil ts'a' yee'at K'aiiroondak nineeriijil.	Then finally we left there and went to K'aiiroondak (Shuman House).
Aaa! akwat t'ee shitseii, nihky'aa neerihiidal.	Ah! then, grandchild, we traveled here and there.
Ndak ts'a' chan yee'an ddhah kak hee chan neerihiidal ts'a' gohch'it zhyaa zhik vaanoodlit nąįį t'inchy'aa gwa'an juhts'ąįį gwa'an k'ii'ee'an yee'ee'an hee ddhah kak googaa neerihiidal.	Over on this side of the mountain, we walked around and finally came to where there was a white man living, and even farther out, there was another mountain, we walked around there too.
Akwat ts'a' yeenji' chan it'ee kwat gohch'it t'ee shitseii datthak t'ee łąįį haa t'igwii'in.	So then we went eastward, and then finally, grandchild, we did all that just using dogs.
Gwintł'oo khats'a' ragwaajii geegwaldak t'iihnyaa.	I'm telling you, we all suffered a lot.
Akwat t'ee gohch'it ndaa ts'a' dzaa chan vaanoodlit kwaa nats'aa.	At that time there were still no white people around here.
Kwat ts'a' yee'at gwizhrii ts'a' gohch'it dee oo'ęę tr'agwąąh'in akhai' ree dzaa gwigwich'ii łii.	Then we just stayed over at our place (at Shuman House) and finally came here, where people were living.
School zhee chan gwakwaa tr'iginkhii zhee chan gwakwaa.	There was no schoolhouse, and no church.
Aiits'a' gohch'it ree oo'ee zhyaa neeneełirąą'ik ts'a''gohch'it ree dzaa drin choh zhit chan ree nagwaanąįį.	So then we just visited with each other and finally New Year came.

Akwat ts'a' t'ee nitsii t'ee
"Dzaa
school zhee tr'agohtsyaa," nyaa.

Akwat ts'a'
aii school zhee tr'igwiłtsąįį tł'ęę
gwiyeetthan
geeghaii ts'a' chan
gwanzhih deek'it
gohtsii gavahnyaa.

Akwat ts'a' gwik'it t'igiizhik łii.

Akwat ts'a' it'ee yeedee
school zhee chan geeghaii chan
tr'igwich'įį goodlit nahąą.

Akwat ts'a' gwiyeetthan chan gwanzhįh
deek'it.

Gohch'it ndaa ts'a' ree zhyaa ree
geech'oąąhtan gwachoo, tr'iginkhii zhee
gwachoo haa zhyaa ree
anłirigweetthal. Aii t'ee nitsii viginjik
k'it dzaa town goodlit roo.

Aiits'a' at'oohju'
gwandaa vat'aałchy'aa,
hee gwanaa
datthak
goo'ąįį geegwaldak t'iihnyaa.

Then your grandfather said,
"Let's build
a schoolhouse here."

And so
after we built a schoolhouse,
down below that,
on the side there,
he told them to make
a place for a garden.

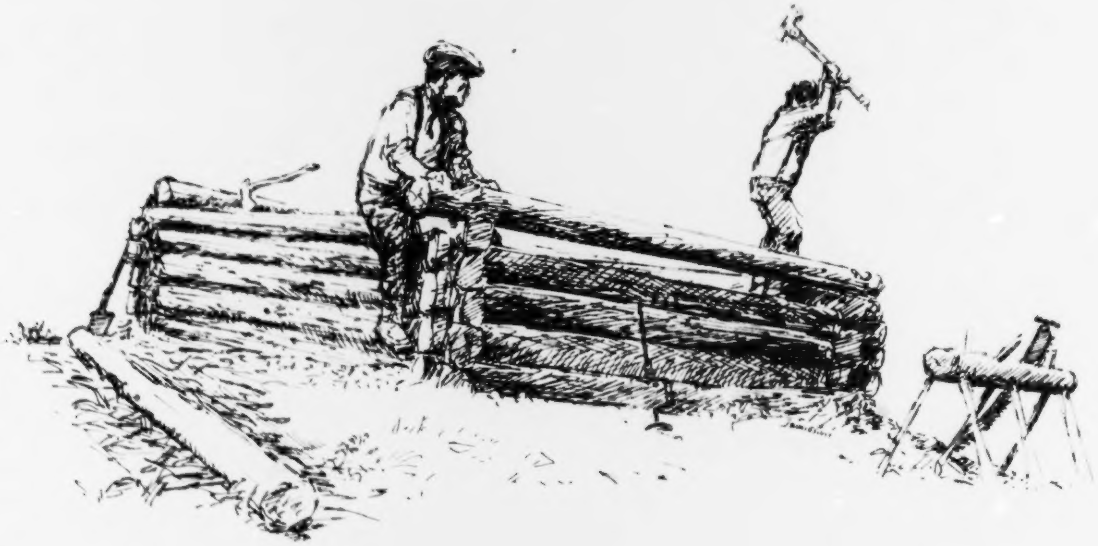
So they did as they were told.

And so after that
we started to stay by the school; you can
see how it got that way.

There is a garden below there, too.

As time went on, there finally was
a big schoolhouse and a big church
standing side by side. And so at your
grandfather's words
a town was established here.

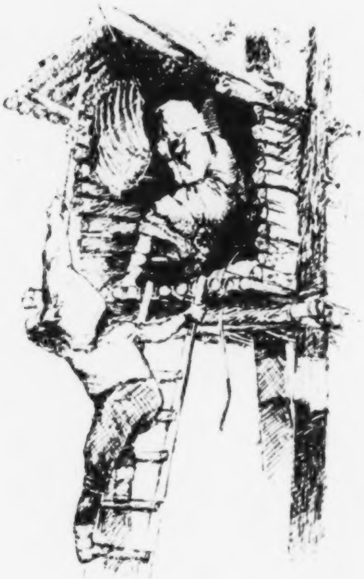
And now finally
I'm talking about
the way it was
here
just a few years back.



6 A moose hunt; sickness

This account has several episodes. First, Belle tells of a moose hunt near Shuman House with either her husband or her brother-in-law (for some reason called "your brother-in-law" in the opening statement). "Six Mile" is the name of several places in the area. In the second episode, Belle tells about hunting by herself. Later that same year, Joe Herbert traveled to Fort Yukon and contracted pneumonia. The doctor who treated him would have been Grafton Burke. A native doctor, Colin Tsal (White Eye's son, who died in 1920 at Beaver) also came to treat him. Belle returned to Shuman House with her husband, then with the help of the Wards took him by dogsled to Fort Yukon, where he got medical care and recovered. Belle dates this episode by the death of William Loola (in June 1916), whom she calls "my grandfather" (a term of respect; he was actually her father's sister's son). William Loola was the minister's assistant in Fort Yukon for many years.

Yee'at t'iichy'aa izhik chan it'ee shahzhrii vaa ihłįį ts'a' zhyaa vaa neehihdik yaa naghwąįį tr'ookit hee.	Over there at Shuman House I lived, and there then I stayed and traveled around with that brother-in-law of yours.
Akwat ts'a' yi'ee'an hee t'ee chan nahadhaazhrii.	So then he and I went out there to hunt.
Akhai' t'ee dinjik diłk'ee, dinjik diłk'ee ts'a' aii geeneedee hee drah doo'ąįį deenaadąį' gwats'an hee.	And he shot a moose, he shot a moose and way up ahead there had been a cache since a long time ago.
Akwat ts'a' aii dinjik diłk'ee khadiint'uu zhat ree nidhiihaa.	So he cut up the moose he had shot and we camped there.
Nihkaa vanh chan hee t'ee dinjik ch'ihłak kiinzhii chan diłk'ee.	The next morning again one moose came out and he shot that too.
It'ee dinjik neekwąįį.	Now it was two moose.
Aaa! shitseii, aii zhyaa tthak khayadant'ii ts'a' vik'eehałdak ąhtsii.	Ah, grandchild, he cut that all up in pieces so I could handle it.
Akwat ts'a' yeedee drah zhit niihłii gwiizhik it'ee aii shih aii tthak oodak niilii t'ee.	Then while I was putting it in the cache, he put all the meat up there too.



Aiits'a'
it'ee oodak
tły'ah
shats'a' nanaazhik aii haa vatł'at
dach'ałchaa ts'a' deeneeyivyaa'ak.

Aiits'a' datthaᴋ vizhit yirinlii.

Aiits'a' it'ee ootthan neehidhii'oo.

Ook'it k'eeneii'oo ts'a' t'ee
chan hee izhik gwiizhik t'ee
vigii nąįį ooduk hee
t'iginchy'aa.
Yaa oodeedi'
Six Mile gagahnyaa
izhik it'ee
jyaa t'eeshihiiłnąįį.

It'ee Gwichyaa gwats'a' nihts'eetr'ihchoodaahnąįį.

Aaa! shitseii
yeedit gwa'an neekwat gwąąhaa gwich'in.

Yeeneenjit ree dinjik tik kyąą'oo.

Then
he threw
a rope up to me
and with the rope I pulled up the meat.

So we put it all up there.

Then we started back down.

When we arrived home,
at that time
his children were living
down there,
way down there
they call it Six Mile;
and there
he left me alone.

He went to Fort Yukon with a boat.

Oh, grandchild,
I think two days had passed.

Three moose came out of the bushes
up that way.

Aaa! shitseii yeetthan zhyaa tr'ih tsal haa naaldraa, naaldraa ts'a' oondok t'aa, t'aa chan kwaa t'aa zhrii Kiin'ee ts'a' aii k'iinji' t'aa tee k'iinji' zhyaa theetaaltłee.	Ah, grandchild, I paddled a little canoe across— I paddled across and there were a few cottonwoods, growing sparsely in just one place and right there there was a little portage.
Akwat ts'a' t'ee ch'izhir teenzhii aiits'a' oodit tł'in neegwaah'ik, k'iinii deegwįįlk'at dǫhłii.	And then a bull moose came out and went in the water, and looked down around the bend.
Jyaa dinchy'aa yeedi' aii goh'it t'ee yaa deenji' dinjik ahaa.	It just stood there in concealment, and then the moose started walking.
Gwiizhik oondit dizhuu viditsik haa oodit tth'aii hee.	Meanwhile, the cow and calf were still where I had seen them first.
Akwat ts'a' it'ee vikįį t'ee theetaalgik.	So then I beat it through the portage again.
Aiits'a' vidivee nikheech'idiitin.	And I sat there waiting for it.
Zhyaa jyaa dii'in oondaa neehaa'aa jyaa dii'in vanan zhrii kheiikak.	I could see it taking a step forward and back, and its back moving back and forth.
Gohch'it t'ee vanan ehzhee t'iihłik.	Finally I shot it below its back.
It'ee jyaa diizhik it'ee łyaa dilk'ee googaa jyaa diizhik.	Even though it was shot, it did like this *(moves hands).*
Neech'ohołk'ee ts'a' t'oonchy'aa kwaa.	I didn't have time to shoot again.
Gwiteegwaanąįį.	It disappeared into the brush.
Aaa! shitseii.	Ah, my grandchild.
Akwat ts'a' tł'ee nihkaa gwandaa ree k'inidik.	Then after a day or two he came back.
Yik'įį gwąąh'in akhai' łyaa dilk'ee k'it'inchy'aa yahnyaa.	He checked its tracks and said it looked like it had been shot.
Gaa shin gwanlįį ts'a' vik'įį gaatr'igweendaii yuu.	But it was summer, so we couldn't track it down.
Aiits'a' t'ee aiitł'ęę t'ee oonjuk k'eeneiidal.	After that we went back up.
Izhik khaiits'a' t'ee aaa! shitseii, t'ee ree neegwiinky'uu chan hee yaagha' Six Mile chan teedeetan ts'a' izhik chan gwats'a' shihiltsit.	That fall, ah, grandchild, when the leaves had fallen, again there at Six Mile it had frozen over and he took me there again.

Ellen shaa.

Tsiik'it zhyaa gwiłtsąįį
sheih kak ree jał haa ch'ajalrahah'aa
łuk ji' gwizhit rahahchaa ghan.

Akwat ts'a'
it'ee nihkaa vanh
t'ee Gwichyaa gwats'a' łąįį haadlii
it'ee teediitan ts'a'.

Aaa! shitseii
aiits'a' oodit k'idik ts'a' koo yiiłkhwąįį dǫhłii.

Googaa koo nint'aii yuunjik googaa gwidįįneehoozhii.

Akhai'
pneumonia dhidlit łii.

Aiits'a'
oodit khiitsik vijųų gwidįį
vaanoodlit gwich'įį
aii Mary Tsoo gwinyaa gwiintth'ak?

Aii eedhidii dąį'
izhik gwigwich'įį izhik
łąįį zhyaa k'eegwaadhat ts'a'
goodąįį tr'iyąąhchįį łii.

Aiits'a' t'ee giyuunjik łii ts'a' giik'ąąhtii ts'a'
zhyaa gwandak k'iighai'
it'ee yee'at
shak'at deegwandak ilnąįį.

Aii it'ee ree
oodi' hoiizhii
aii yeedit
shaghoii Alexander nąįį
t'iginchy'aa
aii tthak
ree shaa gahaajil.

Oo'at geh'at
t'oonchy'aa łii
goodhaii naanąįį.

Akohts'a' it'ee łyaa
akohts'a' t'ee doctor keerahaa'oo.

Nihkaa ree
oodee shaghoii t'inchy'aa izhik hee gwats'a' neediiriihiłchįį.

Ellen was with me.

He just made a cache
in the sand and when we fished with hooks
if we caught fish, we'd put it there.

Then
the next morning
he went to Fort Yukon with dogs,
since it had frozen over.

Ah, grandchild,
when he arrived down there, he had caught a cold.

He knew he had a bad cold, but he started back up.

He actually
had pneumonia.

At that time,
just above the mouth of the Salmon River
there was a white man living;
have you heard of Mary Tsoo?

She was married to him and
it was to their place
that the dogs took their way and
brought him there, it seems.

So they took him in and took care of him;
the news went around
and over at our place
I heard about it by chance.

So then
I went down there
to that place,
and my brother-in-law Alexander's people
who were living there
all
came along with me.

There were some people
living over there;
there was an emergency case.

Then
somebody went down to get a doctor.

The next day
we took him to where my brother-in-law
was living.

Izhik hee ree doctor k'idik.

Akwat
ch'oondaii aii gwik'it
t'inchy'aa kwaa łii ts'a'
oodi' chan ch'oondaii keeneerahoo'oo.

Aaa! shitseii
gwintł'oo shidyąąhch'i'
it'ee łyaa vigwihehkwaa zhrii k'it sheenjit t'inchy'aa.

Akwat ts'a'
doctor
oodi' ch'oondaii kineech'ił'e'.
Aii haa giik'eehiiłtii gwiizhik Colin
Tsal Ida viti'
aii, aii dinjii dazhan tsal t'inchy'aa.

Akwat ree aii vaa gįįhshii
akhai' aii geenjit oodįį hoiizhii t'oonchy'aa shahnyaa.

Akwat ts'a' diihaa gwitr'it t'agwah'ya' ji' gaa vaashandaii kwaa.

Łi'haa
it'ee łyaa gwinzįį gwandaii kwaa dhidlit googaa neegwiindaii.

Akwat ts'a'
gwintsal dineenjit gwinzįį ts'a'
shachaa Moses aii oonji'
shaa neegiyąąhchįį.

Gǫǫ oonjit it'ee łyaa veegogwantrii.

Aiits'a' Joe Ward
gwiizhik khyų' oodi' varahnyaa.

Joe Ward
t'ee gohch'it
akoodiyahnyaa ts'a'
injyaa haa
shaa haazhii ts'a' shįį aii shidyąąhch'i' hałchyaa ts'a' oodi' hoołchįį
shii aii ałchyaa.

Łąįį five
haa t'ishi'in.

Akwat shitseii aii shaghoii aii injyaa haa
zhyaa
shaa ahaa.

Finally the doctor arrived.

But
the medicine
wasn't the right kind and
somebody went down after the medicine.

Ah, grandchild,
I really thought my old man
would be a goner.

But then
the doctor
sent somebody after medicine.
They started to give him medicine, and meanwhile Colin
Tsal, Ida's father,
he was a bit of a medicine man.

So I was talking with him,
and he told me, "That's why I came up."

I don't know if he worked on my husband or not.

He was really
down, but he recovered.

Then
when he was feeling a little better,
my younger brother Moses and I
took him back up there.

But it was really hard for him up there.

So we tried to coax Joe Ward
to go down.

Joe Ward
finally
asked him, and
he and his wife
went with him; I was supposed to take my old man down, so I did;
I myself carried him.

I was using
five dogs.

Then, grandchild, my brother-in-law and his wife
only
were traveling with me.

Akwat zhyaa khyų' t'ishi'in ji' izhik shats'a' tr'iheendal ghan.

Gwiizhik shigii aii oodit Gwichyaa Zhee—zhee shrigwilii.

Aaa!
Akwat oodit k'eerahchik
nizįį kwaa izhik it'ee Loola vakwaa.

Izhik gwahgǫ' izhik t'ee Loola vakwaa t'oonchy'aa.

Akwat t'ee
doctor chan diik'ąąhtii ts'a' t'ee gohch'it t'ee veenjit gwinzįį neegwiilii roo.

Akwat ts'a' t'ee
chan shitsii chan t'ee iłts'ik t'ee.

Akwat t'ee
it'ee łąą gwiłgǫ' gwiizhik t'ee shitsii vakwaa roo.

Aii gwiizhik t'ee yaagha' shidyąąhch'i' chan veenjit gwinzįį neegwiidhat.

Aiitł'ee gwandaa hee gohjų' yee'at chan gwits'eehidhii'oo.

Whenever I was unable to do anything, he helped.

Meanwhile, my son had been fixing a house in Fort Yukon.

Ah!
Finally we got him down there,
and then Loola died!

It was when the snow was melting there that Loola died.

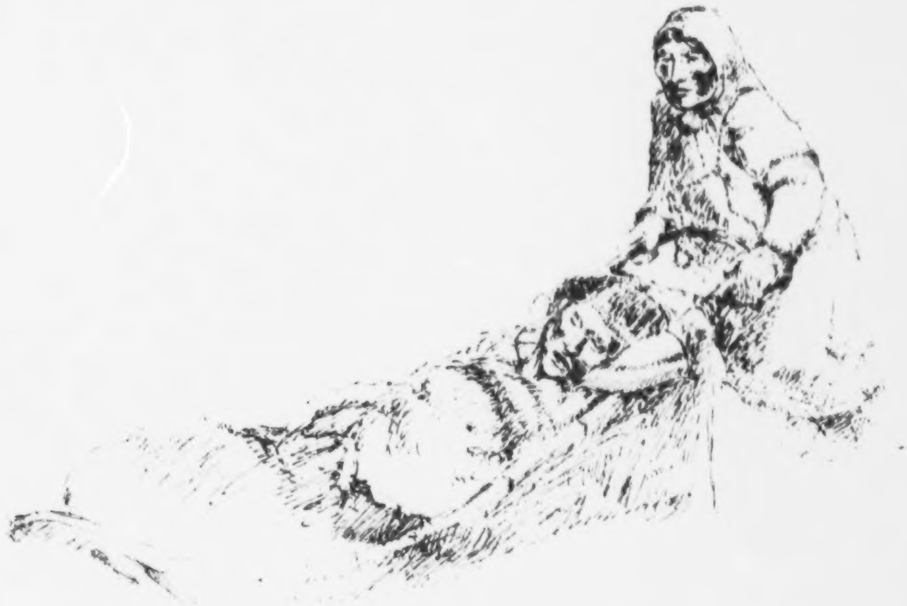
Then
with the doctor taking care of him, he was finally getting better.

Then,
my grandfather got sick too.

And
after all the snow had melted, my grandfather died.

All this time, my old man was getting better.

Later on, we went back over home.



Aaa!
shitseii
gwintł'oo gwitr'it gwintsii gwiltsąįį.

Aii oodi' t'ahthee shihthan naałchįį.

Vaanoodlit shaa injyaa
aii haa
t'ishi'in.

Shatth'an tee tsaldhaghaa dąį' neehihdik
gogwantrii shaa nagwaatth'at t'ee.

Gwintł'oo gwitr'it
nitsii shigwitr'it
nitsii shaa nagwaatth'at.

Ah!
grandchild,
a lot of work went into that.

I took him a long way.

The white man and his wife
were with me
when I did this.

The snow was drifted up over my legs
and it was hard for me to walk.

It was hard work,
that big task of mine,
it turned out to be hard for me.

7 Old-time clothing

Summer clothing was made of caribou skins without the hair, and for winter clothing the hair was left on for warmth. The pants with attached footpieces that Belle mentions must have been going out of style when she was young. Both pants and shirts were decorated with beads (before traders came, with dyed porcupine quills). There were fringes all around the bottom of the shirt. The elaborate dog harnesses described were apparently an introduction from Canada; they were not the kind used today, made entirely of flat straps, but instead resembled a horse harness with a padded, stiff collar rising to a "horn" at the top of the neck. When Belle told the story, she took out a little bell of the kind used on harnesses and rang it.

Ninghit dąį' k'eejit ihłįį dąį' geegwahaldak.	I'll tell you about long ago when I was young.
Inglis ky'aa tr'ahotł'įį chan gwaatsii.	Men wore English (Canadian) style clothes.
Akwat dinjii ch'idreetąįh thał jyaa dąhjyaa gii'įį.	And men wore britches that were this long. *(indicates with hands)*
Akwat ts'a' aadzii vandąąt'aii khathaagilchaa.	They had caribou-skin strings on it that they tied around their waists.
Aii ankhwachaa aii dzaa chan naagąįį tsal haa chan iltsąįį.	And it was decorated around here *(indicates with hands)* with beads.
Akwat ts'a' it'ee ch'idreetąįh thał.	And those were called *ch'idreetaih thał,* britches.
Akwat ts'a' kwaiitryaa aii chan khaih k'ii khyuu khanilch'aa aii t'ee tth'aa agahnyaa.	At that time moccasins were also sewn with a kind of sinew called *tth'aa.*
Aii haa giyandoo kwaii ree.	That kind was twisted.
Aii kwaii zhit gaa'yuu aii t'ee khaii kwaiitryah choh.	Those that they wore were big winter moccassins.
Aii yehdak t'ee ch'idreetąįh thał zhit gaa'yuu.	And over them they wore the britches (or leggings).
Akwat ch'eetak nąįį ch'anjaa nąįį dazhoo thał vakwai' vitsįį aii gweezhak naagąįį jeiinchy'aa.	And some older people wore fur pants with feet sewn to them, and beads on them down this way.

Naagąįį vakwaiichan jeiinchy'aa
aii zhit giil'yuu gwiizhik aii
ch'igii ik aii chan
jii vaghah k'at tthak gwiltsąįį.

Aii tthak dradantthak aii vit'įį googaa tthak
łąą t'inchy'aa.

Akwat dzaa gweezhak
aii tth'ak k'it t'inchy'aa haa gogwahtsii.

Akwat ts'a' vit'įį chan
giits'ee ch'ok chan gahtsii.

Aiits'a' thah
choo chan akhagilchaa.

Łąįį kwaii
ch'adhaa łąįį tły'aa tr'aghan nahąą.

Ch'adhaa łąįį tły'aa tr'aghan chan
vikiitsii ch'iitsii tsal jyaa dinchy'aa ts'a'
dzaa chan vikiitsii
chan jidii ghoo dhidlii ts'a' dzat gweezhak
  chan ohotł'ii zhok aii
va'oo t'igwirilik.

There were beads around the ankles
on the footed pants they wore, and
the parka or shirt
also had beads all around the shoulders.

And all around the back was
a border of fringe.

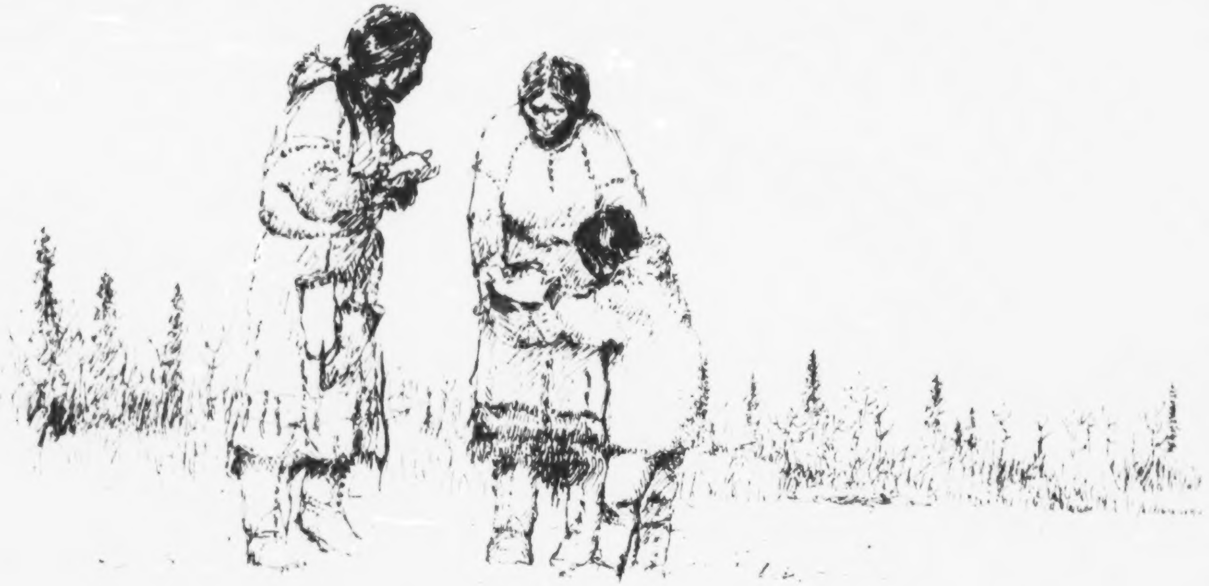
And running down it
they also made a fringe like this.

And on it they also
made a pointed hood.

And they belted it
with a wide braided belt (from Canada).

For the dogs
they made skin harnesses.

The neck strap of the harness
had a little piece of metal on top,
right here on top,
and on top of that they put little round
balls of yarn.



Aii oodee vikiitsii chan riibin
lęįį gahochaa.

Dǫǫ dilįį ts'a'
aii goots'i' k'it jeiinchy'aa tthak riibin zhrii gookiit'ik gahochaa.
Goots'i' k'it zhree.

Aiits'a'
łąįį tły'aa. . .jyaa
dąhjyaa zhree
aaa! lęįį ts'a'. . .
aiits'a' goonantaa jyaa dinchy'aa
oondaa googhin chan
ch'iitsii laii. . . .

Akwat ch'iitsii laii ghoo aii goonantaa
jyaa dinchy'aa.

Jii aii googhin
jeiinchy'aa.

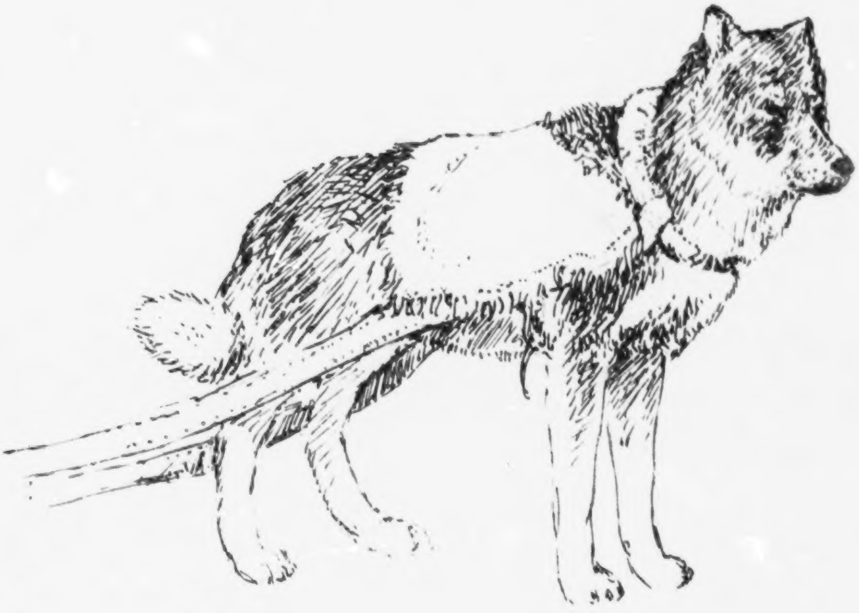
And at that spot they tied
a lot of ribbons.

They used four colors and
tied all the ribbons to the place right
on top of the back of the neck.

And also
on the harnesses,
about like this,
oh! there were a lot of....
there was a crosspiece like this,
and around the neck
was a little bell.

There were little round bells on the crosspieces
just like that.

The other
was around the neck.



Tąįį ts'at
jyaa dąhjyaa zhree
aii t'ee łąįį ts'at
łąįį taa
aii vakak gwantaan'ee ts'a' gehdee chan
ohotł'ii zhok haa veelin tthak
łihts'ee. . . dha'ee.

A trail blanket
about this long *(indicates with hands)*
a dog blanket,
went over the dog,
and it was decorated with yarn
all around its border.

Akwat ts'a' naagąįį
chan haa
vakak gwanatthaach'arąąhtthaii ts'a'
gohch'it łąįį ts'at jyaa
chy'aa
zhyaa vakak tthak zhyaa ch'ihiłdrin
naagąįį tthak jii tthak naagąįį t'agah'in.

Then beads
also
were sewn in and out, and
finally the dog blanket,
the old kind,
was just sparkling all over,
they made it beaded all over.

Akwat ts'a'
dzaa gweenji' viji' jeiinchy'aa aii tsii chan
riibin.

And
there was a lot of ribbon on the horn.

Gohch'it k'ii'ee
łąįį nąąh'oo chy'aa gwadal jeiinchy'aa
jyaa dinchy'aa.

So when
the dogs came along harnessed like that
they just jangled.

Gwintł'oo aakin ch'igwiidlįį
aiits'a' dachaaval
aii dachaaval aii chan
vats'an tr'iyidiin'ee kwaa.

It was really something to hear,
and the toboggan
the toboggan was a type
that had no handlebars.

Vadhahk'it chan gwanlįį kwaa.

It had no skin covering on it.

Zhyaa ch'adhaa dahotthoo
vadhaa njaa tr'ahtsik ts'a'
aii vizhit goodlii.

They smoke-tanned a moosehide,
made a bag of it and
put their things in it.

Aii gwakak ndaa chan ts'at
giit'aahchy'aa łint'eelzhii, chan vakak ndaa
aiits'a' at'oohju' t'ee gaatł'įį.

The blankets they used on it
were folded carefully and put on top,
and then they tied the whole thing down.

Oozhee dachaavał
aii kak tły'aa jyaa darah'in,
jyaa darah'in
aii haa zhrii gaatł'įį
vatai' kwaa.

On top of the toboggan
we did like this with a rope,
we did like this,
that was all that held it down;
it didn't have any handles.

Vadhaak'it chan gwakwaa.

There was no skin covering.

Akwat ts'a' zhyaa ree
ndaa vach'aroąąh'ee ts'a' łąįį ts'a' gwii'ee
hee chan jyaa darah'in.

And they helped the dogs,
pushing with a pole when they weren't
strong enough.

Akwat izhik tr'injaa nąįį chan
dazhoo thał zhangiil'yuu aii chan kak
naagąįį.

At that time the women also
wore skin pants with beads on them.

Alice: What kind of skin did they use?

Ch'akhaa inghii tr'iitthoo aii ch'adhaa ts'ik jyaa tr'ahtsik jihnyaa.	We made a long bag out of smoked skin, as I said.
Aaa! shitseii łąįį tły'aa chan giyahkhii chan giyiitthoo.	Ah! grandchild, even the dog harnesses were made of smoked and tanned hide.
Dachaavał thaa gahtsii aii chan giyahkhii tł'uu hee chan chaavał thaa gahtsii.	They made the toboggan cover out of soft smoked hide, they made the toboggan cover too.
Gwintł'oo gwitr'it gwintsii gwaatsii geegiihkhii t'iihnyaa shitseii.	It was really a lot of work, when they tanned hides, as I said, grandchild.
Zhik zhyaa gwighyaa'in gwizhrii geegihkhii.	I only talked a little about it.
Akwat aii tr'injaa chan ree dazhoo thał choo hee naagąįį haa jyaa dinchy'aa zhoo'yuu.	Well, the women also wore big fur pants with beads on them, that's what they wore.
Gwiizhik chan dazhoo ik jyaa dąhjyaa ree naatsuu.	And she also wore a fur parka about this long.
Aii dazhoo ik aii chan jyaa dinchy'aa ts'a' gwizhrii, jeiinchy'aa.	The fur parka was made just the way I said it was.
Aii googaa tth'aii nihk'it jyaa dinchy'aa.	It was always the same.
Akwat aii vitł'in tthak dahotthoo chyaa łihts'eedhi'ee.	All around the bottom edge was a border of smoked hide.
Gwiizhik dzat k'iizhak chan naagąįį haa daho'il, dzat k'iizhak nihts'ii yaaghat diint'ii k'iizhak chan aii vitsįį hee ahotł'ii zhok tsał ganhochaa.	And down this way were dangling beads, and down each side and down the back too, and the point had a little yarn tied to it.
Geetak hee chan k'iizhak t'inchy'aa dzaa vitł'in datthak naagąįį haa jyaa dinchy'aa.	Sometimes all the way down and around the border was done with beads.
Akwat dzat k'ii'an naagąįį jeiinchy'aa.	This part too *(shows with hands)* was beaded.
Jyaa dinchy'aa.	That's how it was.

Dzaa chan veelin chan
tthah haa
aadzii tthak kwaii
haa veelin. . .aii haa vaa neerahantrak ts'a' dzaa ree kahthaa di' k'it ree t'inchy'aa.

Aaa! shitseii, gwinlin tsingwąąhchy'aa tr'ahotł'įį.

Kwat jyaa doonchy'aa
shin hee ree googaa ch'adhaa
thał zhangaa'yuu.

Vakwai' gwanlįį ree.

Geeghaii ts'a' gwat'agahaahchy'aa gwanlįį kwaa it'ee gwizhrii roo.

Akwat shitseii gwintł'oo
neeshreegwąąhchy'a' googaa
tsingwąąhchy'aa ts'a' adadahotł'ii nąįį gwanlįį gwinli' t'igwinyaa.

And around here
with an awl
and caribou skin
they sewed a border, and when they pulled the caribou skin, it tied up just like a sack.

Ah! grandchild, it was often funny the way people dressed.

The way it was,
even in the summertime
they wore skin pants.

They had feet on them.

There was nothing they could use except what was available to them.

So, grandchild, times were
very hard then and
people dressed strangely, that's how it was.

8 Life in the old days

Belle mentions "bark houses," which were temporary shelters of the lean-to type covered with sheets of birch-bark. The "red tent" was a traveling shelter stained with ochre. The "Canadian blankets" were probably the trade blankets known as "Hudson's Bay blankets."

Akwat t'ee ree Inglis yeenjit Old Rampart gwizhrii hee khehkwaii t'inchy'aa gwich'in.	So it was the Canadians were upriver at Old Rampart and there was just a chief there, I think.
Chan ch'ihłok gwaał'ya' neeshraałchy'aa ganaldaii kwaa ilii googaa ganaldaii.	I saw it once when I was very small, I never would have remembered, I just barely remembered it.
Aaa!	Ah!
Akwat aii.	Well then.
Jyaa diginchy'aa ts'a' shin hee googaa ree ch'eetak nąįį aatr'ii zhee zhyaa gwaatsii t'igwinyaa.	It was like that in the summertime but some people made bark houses for themselves, they say.
Gogwantrii roo.	Times were very hard.
Geetak hee gwizhrii zheegwadhaa aii chan zheegwadhaa daatsik ree.	Sometimes there was just a skin tent, and the skin tent was painted red.
Gwintł'oo neeshreegwąąhchy'aa.	Times were really very hard.
Akwat geetak chan Inglis ts'at nał'in.	And sometimes I saw those Canadian blankets.
Geetee hee chan dazhoo ts'at shin hee googaa, ditr'uu ts'at ree.	Sometimes we used fur blankets even in the summertime, robes from which the fur had fallen.
Akwat ts'a' tsuu chan nał'in kwaa.	Well, I never saw a pillow.
Vadzaih dhaa khaiinjik vaghai' tsal geetak hee dhidlii yeendee ts'at iltsuu aii zhrii.	Just caribou skins with the hair falling off, with patches of hair here and there, were lying there, that's all.
Dagogwach'aa lat tsal aii yeenjit digikįį t'agąhthan aii kak gikigaazhii gwaał'in.	What little clothing we had we used as pillows, folding them under our heads.

Gwintł'oo
neeshreegwąąhchy'a'
gwi'it gwiizhį' gaa
ree gwintł'oo tr'igwįhjik gwachoo.

Aii gwik'iighai' juk diineenjit gwinzįį
gwaatth'aa t'oonchy'aa.

Geeneegįįhjii
googaa
gitr'ii'ee ts'a' gwįhdaii
chy'aa yaa nakhwalak
nįįghit nan kak gwats'at k'ii'ee
neehidik geh'an
geegwaldak t'iihnyaa.

Gwintł'oo dinjii khaiinji'hojik t'oonchy'aa.

Aii tr'iinin tr'inlįį dąį'
gwintł'oo
neeshreeraahchy'aa.

Ti'yaa valak nąįį
tee ts'a' teediirahaadlii.

Ni'ęę valak aii yeedit Gwichyaa
aii googaa ree
gwinzįį
ch'ihłak t'araahchy'aa kwaa
ni'ęę zhrii khanaandaii
. . . tr'ijit gwach'aa tsal
dineetł'oodąąghit.

Akwat
dazhoo ts'at
oo'ok
tr'ah'ii aii haa
ch'adhaa dazhoo kwaii haa gaayii daatsii
aii ree adhaatł'įį dǫhłii.

Geh dhaa kwaii haa.

Jyaa dirinchy'a'.

Akwat
juk gwintł'oo
duuyee chiitee rąąh'in.

Duuyee
neeshraahchy'aa nąįį k'aahtįį gwachoo
dzaa nan kak nigwiijyaa
ts'a' nats'a' dee tr'iits'aa tr'iheendal.

Izhik gwanaa gwintł'oo
neeshreegwąąhchy'a'.

It was really
poor,
and I don't remember it too well,
I was really unaware of things then.

Compared to those days, we get along
very well today.

I don't even
like to talk about it
very much,
but since our friend here
has traveled a long way to get here,
I'll tell about it.

People really suffered a lot then.

When we were children,
we were really
very poor.

My father's relatives
took us in.

My mother's relatives lived in Fort Yukon
but
we didn't
bother them very much;
my mother just worked to support us,
and scrounged up
a little clothing for us.

Then
we had
skin blankets;
she worked for the skins
out where other people were getting skins,
and that's what we wore, I guess.

We had rabbit skins too.

That's how we were.

Now
in these days,
we don't ever see orphans like that.

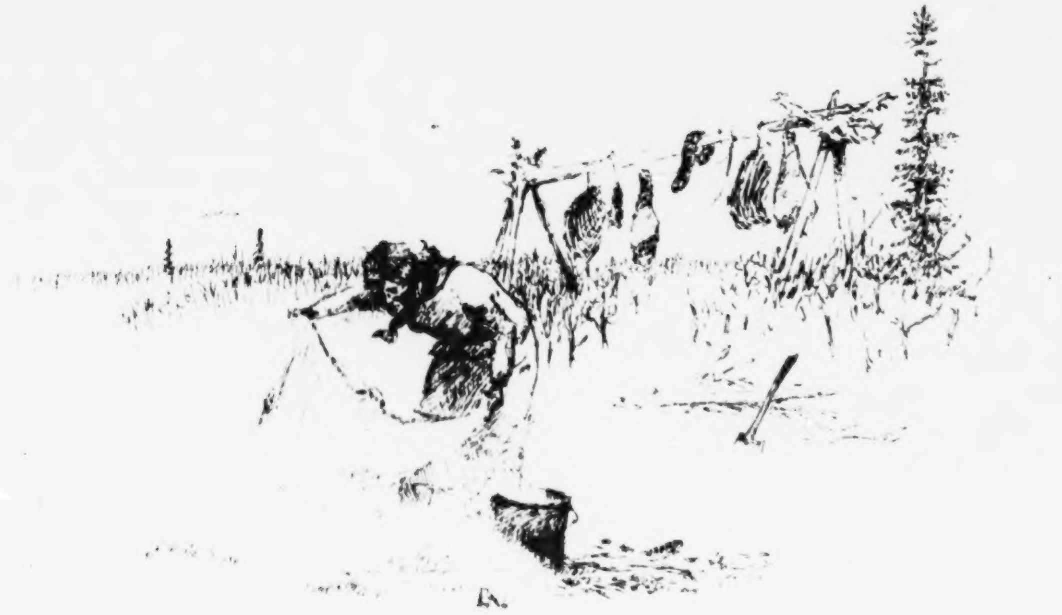
There is no way
we'll be poor again, because people take
care of us around here with welfare,
so there is nothing we lack.

But in the old days, we were very poor.

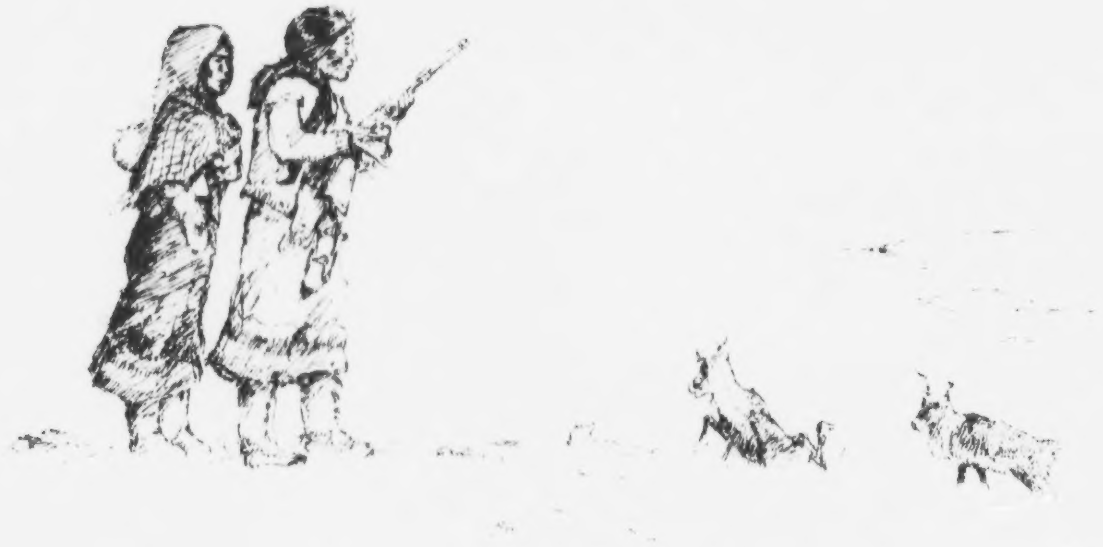
9 Traveling; marriages; a tragedy

The events in this story took place between 1910 and 1920. The Wards were married in January 1914, and Sam Herbert married Jenny in June 1919. The first episode probably took place in the mountains north of Graphite Point. "Shooting on New Year's Day" refers to the old custom of firing rifles as part of the celebration. Paul Herbert, mentioned in the account, was Belle's husband's nephew; Nena is Nena Peterson, whose Gwich'in name means "chickadee." The child and the white man whose deaths are described in the final episode have not been identified.

Aiits'a' ch'ihłan chan yi'eendak hee highiijil izhik chan Joe Ward nakhwaa.	One time too we went up there and Joe Ward was with us.
Aaa! shitseii vadzaih gwanlįį, it'ee drin tsal ts'a' ree.	Ah! grandchild, it was just before Christmas then.
Drin tsal t'ee oondak tr'ahaajil akwat drin choh zhit akwat oondok ddhah kak hee.	We went up around Christmastime and spent New Year's up there on the mountain.
Aaa! shitseii vadzaih gwanlįį ts'a' ch'aadoo.	Ah! grandchild, there were a lot of caribou, and they just kept shooting.
Drin choh zhit ch'aadoo chy'aa gwik'it drin choh zhit gwintł'oo vadzaih gwanlįį.	It was like the way they used to shoot guns off on New Year's Day, there were so many caribou there.
Akwat shitseii ts'a' izhik khaii t'ee shiyeh'at yeedįį khadhizhii.	Well, grandchild, then that winter my daughter-in-law came up from downriver.
Ginkhii choh k'iighai' Jenny.	It was because of Big Preacher, Jenny.
Akwat ts'a' izhik hee akwat drin choh zhit vadzaih lęįį ginghan.	Then there on New Year's Day they killed a lot of caribou.
Gwiizhik Ellen haa zhrii oodee.	Just Ellen and I were up there.
. . .Khik, khik gwintł'oo aii vadzaih oo'ęę niginlii.	. . .All the time they kept bringing those caribou into camp.



Aii datthak tr'ałt'ii ts'a' vatth'an chan ihtthat khwaii ałtsii.	I cut them all up and I pounded the bones and made grease.
Akwat ts'a' aadzii chan ałtsii yee'ok zhyaa aadzii dilgaii tł'il kwaii haa hagaa ree.	Then I cleaned the caribou skins, and the place was full of white caribou skins and babiche.
Akwat izhik t'ee nich'it Charley Crow vinich'it khaiints'a' dinky'ałthat gaanandaii.	At that time you know, I was raising Charley Crow's youngest daughter.
Aii Noah vahan aii t'ee natsal gwiizhik shantł'eerahchįį roo.	She was Noah's mother; they gave her to me to raise when she was small.
Aii chan dinky'ałthat t'inchy'aa.	That's who I raised.
Aii shaa akwat Ellen aii zhyaa yee'at than t'inchy'aa.	Well, she was with me, but Ellen was living by herself.
Akwat shitseii datthak Gwichyaa gwats'a' gahaajil.	Then, grandchild, they all went down to Fort Yukon.



Dzat nakhwahzhrii oodok ddhah kak hee.	We were up on the mountain all by ourselves.
Akwat gohch'it ree zhyaa yee'at gwats'a' ree ch'ihilk'ee tth'ak.	Then finally we heard a shot close by.
Akwat ree k'iitthan ree ch'iltaa.	Then we heard a shot right down that way.
Gwiizhik chan dhałts'ik nagwaanąįį.	Meanwhile, I had fallen sick.
Akwat vaa dhałts'ik nagwaanąįį than hee gavaa dhałts'ik nagwaanąįį.	I had fallen sick while we were all alone; I got sick.
Aaa! shitseii gohch'it chan gwąąhaa gwich'in.	Ah! grandchild, finally I think the night had gone by.
Gohch'it dink'ee tr'iihtth'ak chy'aa.	Finally we just heard a shot.
Gohch'it ree zhyaa vanh dąį' gwats'a' gwigwiin'aii yee'ęę ree zhyaa Paul Herbert, John Herbert vidinji' aii yeedit Nena Ch'idzigaak izhik diik'at deegaajil.	At last, early in the morning, along to our camp came Paul Herbert, John Herbert's son, and from down there, Nena Ch'idzigaak.

Akwat ts'a'
ch'ihłęę diihaa t'iginchy'aa.

Akwat ts'a'
akhai' chan t'ee Gwichyaa Zhee gwats'a'
haazhii ts'a' yaaghat
tr'iinin khadhaldii kwaii haa
zhyaa ree yeedok ddhah kak jyaa
diihiłjil.

Gohch'it dee
needraadhal gwiizhik gohch'it dee
Gwichyaa Zhee gwats'at k'eeneegiidal.

Gwintł'oo gwiizuu.

Akwat ts'a' ree
it'ee chan
Ellen haa
oodok ddhah kak k'eehidhii'oo.

Akhai'
zhyaa ree vadzaih gwanlįį.

Yaaghok googaa neech'ahaa'oo.

Aiits'a' vadzaih dǫǫ t'ee teech'adoołk'ee.

It'eełi' chy'aa
zhik ch'iki' aii chan teeneihtuu ts'a'
ch'itsik chan vakak dałgąįį
ts'a' vaghwaa
ghwai'
chan ałtsii ts'a' vizhee chan thok
tał'in ts'a'
gwintł'oo shih lęįį.

Aii
tthak yeetthan neerahaadlii.

Jeiinchy'aa ts'a' yeedit
Gwichyaa Zhee
datthak gwats'a' hee tr'oonjik.

Aiits'a' oodit hee
. . .hagaa neenahodlat gaa tr'iłtsąįį roo.

Aaa! shitseii
akǫǫ
Ellen chan ree
oodee gwats'an neerihiijyaa
izhik
Ellen
tsin t'iizhik.

Then
they stayed with us for a while.

Then
he took off for Fort Yukon and left
that kid I was raising, and me,
up there on the mountain
while they all left.

Finally
they came back from Fort Yukon, when it
was getting warm in the daytime.

It was very bad.

Then
after that
Ellen and I
started to walk around on the mountain.

And
there were just a lot of caribou.

They even walked around nearby.

And so I shot four caribou.

Well then,
I cut up the heads and
half-dried the ribs
and made marrow
grease
also, and the marrow alone
I prepared and
there was really a lot of food.

All that
we took down the mountain.

Just like that
we took it all down
to Fort Yukon.

And down there
we even made Indian ice cream.

Ah! grandchild,
then
Ellen
was leaving there with us
and then
Ellen
became very ill.

Aaa! shitseii vadaa vats'an nilįį łii.	Ah! grandchild, she apparently had her period then.
Gwiizhik neerahoojil ts'a' zhaa nidįįltil łii ts'a' zhyaa chųų veiinląįį k'it t'ii'in.	While we were traveling she fell through the snow crust and just started hemorrhaging.
Akhai' ree oodit ree gwats'a' tr'oonjik roo.	So we just took her down to the village.
Googaa t'ee shraazhik t'ee.	However, she got cured.
Aaa! shitseii gwintł'oo neeshraahchy'aa dhidlit.	Ah! grandchild, she really got in bad shape.
Akwat ts'a' aii chan lidii tr'ahtsii gwintł'oo ninghuk hee zhat t'igwinchy'a' izhik.	Then after that we had a potlatch and stayed there for quite a long time.
Aii gwiizhik Circle chan gwats'a' haazhii łii shigii aii it'ee Jenny noohaanjik łii ts'a' dzaa k'eehiidal giky'anjik ts'a' Circle gwats'a' haazhii łii.	Meanwhile my son had gone to Circle and it seems he was going to marry Jenny, and hearing we were coming in, he set off for Circle.
Aii nich'it adankhai' dinjii vats'an neeheelyaa gwahtsii łii roo.	That girl apparently wanted to get married again.
Gwats'a' yaa shigii zhyaa oohaanjik łii.	So she was after my son.
Akwat ts'a' John Herbert vigii Paul Herbert aii gitr'ii'ee łii.	But John Herbert's son, Paul Herbert, didn't like the idea.
Ndaa łigwidineechyaa gwiizhik zhat k'eii'oo łii roo.	He was waiting patiently when we arrived.
Gohch'it ree t'eehozhii aii chan oondaa ch'aroogit zhee hee chan nihdeiinzhii łii.	Finally he came down and went to stay at the pool-room house.
It'ee ree vats'a' hoiizhii, shaa oodi' neezhii.	So I went to see him and he came home with me.
Akwat łyaa ree chiitee cheehałchii gitr'ii'ee.	Now really, I didn't want to kick out an orphan.
Aii geh'an t'ee vats'a' akhai' t'iyaach'it.	That's why we left them alone.

It'eełi' chy'aa gwinzįį shik'eehaahtyaa t'ał'in łii.	Later on she took care of me really good.
Shitseii gwintł'oo shiyeh'at gwinzįį shik'ęęłtii.	Grandchild, my daughter-in-law really took good care of me.
Than łąą yindhan kwaa ree.	She didn't care if she was out alone.
Akwat hee oodi' gwinky'aa gwizhrii ginkhii geetak hee vaanoodlit ky'aa giyaaginkhii.	Now, she only spoke downriver language (Koyukon), and sometimes they spoke English to her.
Akwat gohch'it ree diniitth'ak ch'ihłan khaii googaa diniitth'ak naanąįį.	She got able to understand us after just one winter she could understand us.
Ch'ihłęę ch'akai' gwats'an adoodinchy'aa gwich'in.	Maybe she was like that from some time before.
Akwat ts'a' it'ee ree nikhweenjit gwinzįį.	So then we felt better.
Chan ree gohch'it Joe Ward chan ree Ellen ooheendal nigwiighit łii roo.	Finally the time came when Joe Ward and Ellen got married.
Gohch'it chan ree Ellen chan ree vaanoodlit yuunjik.	Finally Ellen also married a white man.
Akwat ts'a' yee'at zhyaa ree kwaiik'it gwintsii zhyaa ree nihk'ehnji' ree zhyaa khik nihłaa t'iriichy'aa k'it t'oonchy'aa ts'a' ree.	So then there were two big villages not very far apart, and we stayed together all the time over by Shuman House.
Akwat ts'a' ree kwaiik'it gwintsii k'it zhyaa ree t'oonchy'aa łii.	At that time it was just like a big village.
Ts'a' t'ee juk tth'aii nats'aa deegwiheechy'aa li' khehłee googwiinjik ts'a' ree t'igwiizhik t'oonchy'aa.	Well, I wonder how it would be now; it happened that both of them got hurt.
Aii shaghoii aii shigii vigii vidinji' vakwaa gwintł'oo tr'iłts'ik nagwaanąįį oodi' diirihiłtsit tǫǫ jyaa digwii'in kwat łąą vaaragoondak ts'a' t'oonchy'aa kwaa roo.	Then my brother-in-law's my child— that is, his child, his son died; he got very sick and we took him right down in the middle of the night; we had no time to tell him.

Akwat ts'a' shitseii
it'ee
drin tł'ęę
khaa ts'a'
khai' ts'a' hee radio dąįį naadii akhai' zhyaa ch'oohiiłk'ii
akhai' deenyaa.

Yeeneedit gwiich'ii nakhwatseii
gwats'at tr'iinzhii kwaa
gwaak'ii łii.

Gwintł'oo vaanoodlit tr'igwidii dhidlit nyaa.

Akwat ts'a' jeiinchy'aa ts'a' t'ee
khyah ts'eehoozhii łii.

Akhai'
k'iinjik needyaa akhai' tł'eedik zhah zhit
aii ch'iitsii tły'aa kwat gweenin diłchaa dǫhłii.

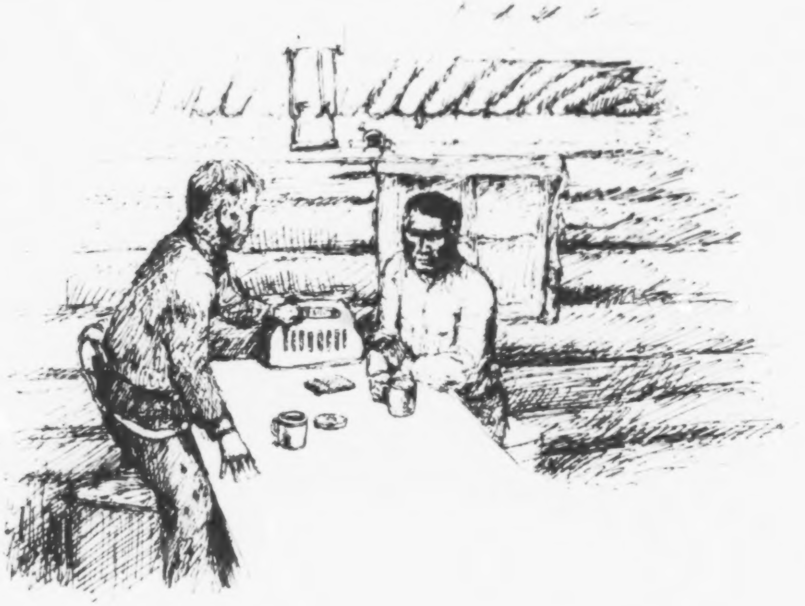
And then, grandchild,
then
on Monday
evening
he sat down to listen to the radio and heard about it,
they spoke of it.

We living down below heard
that our grandchild
didn't live through it.

That white man was really grieved, they say.

And being that way, he just
went back out on his trapline.

And
he had checked his traps and was coming back down, and going down a snowbank he had put a dog chain around his waist, I guess.



Aii gwiizhik
łąįį gwidit'ee
. . .yaahnąįį łii.

Łąįį datły'aach'ił'oo gaa
ch'adai' vakwaa.

Aiits'a' chan tǫǫ hee chan vagwandak
haa yeedi' tr'ahaa'oo.

Aiits'a' t'ee vankach'ąąt'ak
aiits'a'. . .
k'eevyaach'adąąhnąįį vaanoodlit nilįį geh'an
shriit'ahkhyuk gwiindaii.

Drin tthak gaa tr'int'uu
. . .googaa
gohch'it
it'ee. . .nivichį'aanąįį.

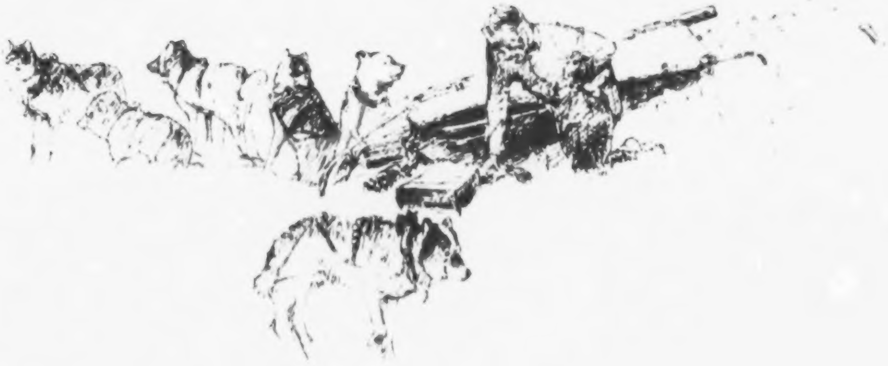
And then
the dogs pulled him
over the bank.

The dogs pulled him over the bank and
he died instantly.

That night somebody went down to break
the news to him.

Then the plane came for him
but
the chain had cut him through at the waist;
he was a white man, that's why he
lived as long as he did.

All day they operated on him
. . .but
finally
then. . .his life slipped away.



10 Traveling up the Porcupine

Belle describes her family: she had four brothers (Robert or Chief Robert, Erick, Moses, and William) and one older sister (Eliza) who was already married at this time. Her father, who died when Belle was very young, was related by marriage to the Loola family, who were Canadian in origin. After Belle's father died, the family went to live near his relatives at Teetsik. Belle remembers how William Loola cured Charley Crow; there were at least two men named Charley Crow, one of whom died in 1947, said to be over 100, so this may have been the same man. The family spent the winter at Teetsik and then traveled by boat to Tł'oo Kat (see map). They traveled farther downriver. Belle remembers that there was no settlement at New Rampart, but there was one at Old Rampart at the mouth of the Salmon Trout River. This dates the episode between 1869, when the Hudson's Bay Company moved from Fort Yukon to Old Rampart, and 1889, when they moved from Old to New Rampart or Rampart House on the border. After spending some time at Old Rampart, the family went on to the Chandalar country or *Neets'ąįį*, a journey described more in text 21.

Ti'yaa niindhat googaa.	Even my father died.
Jii shįį jii shachaa shats'aii jii vagwanlįį gwiizhik t'ee ti'yaa vakwaa.	This is me and my younger brother was next to me that boy was born when my father died.
Ch'ihłak zhrii shitsįį gwiizhik t'ee vakwaa ts'a' niindhat googaa vaashandaii kwaa roo.	There was only one child ahead of me; I was so young when my father died that I didn't even know of it.
Aii gwats'an yeenjit Circle t'ee niindhat t'inchy'aa.	He died away from there, over in Circle.
Aii gwats'an gweenii hidhiijil ts'a' dzaa niriinjil.	So we came down from there, and we settled here.
It'ee ti'yaa veejii chan gwandaii aiits'a' aii tr'injaa neekwąįį, dinjii neekwąįį kwaii haa di'įį.	Then his older sister was still living; and she had two girls and two boys.
Aiits'a' veejii it'ee Loola nąįį.	Now my father's older sister was a member of the Loola family.
Aii t'ee ti'yaa valak nąįį ginlįį.	They were my father's relatives.
Akwat ts'a' it'ee izhik gwanaa t'ee kheezhii gwanaa nahąą.	At that time then, they called those people Kheezhii.
Aii gwits'i' hee shee'ii nąįį dzaa gwats'a' ni'ęę gihił'e' t'iginchy'aa.	On account of that, my uncles sent my mother over here.

Aii gwats'a' t'ee yeenji' ddhah kak tr'ahaajil.	And from there we traveled up into the mountains.
Gwintł'oo ihtsal geegwaldak t'iihnyaa.	I was very small at the time I'm telling about.
Vijuu gwanaa niinghit hee geegwaldak Vasdik deehǫǫhtsal dee geegwandak shahnyaa.	Later on, I was telling about it and Vasdik asked, "How little were you when you told about it?"
Gwikii niinghit hee juk geegwaldak t'iihnyaa.	I'm telling you now about long before that.
Aiits'a' yeenji' tr'ahaajil ts'a' yaaghat Teetsik gehnji' ni'inlii garahnyaa izhik hee t'ee Charley Crow gwich'įį łii.	Then we went up to Teetsik there; up yonder at a place called Ni'inlii Charley Crow was living.
Nihts'ii konh dha'ąįį ch'ank'aa ginkhii Loola gwich'įį łii.	There were two sod houses facing each other and on one side the preacher Loola was living.
Dzaa chan adan gwich'įį łii gwiizhik t'ee nahkhii dhidlit łii.	And he himself was living in the other sod house; it was at that time he became crazy.
Nahkhii dhidlit.	He became crazy.
It'ee tr'ookit t'ahoozhik nał'ya' aii gwizhrii nał'ya'.	I saw him when he was first getting like that; that's the only time I saw him.
Oo'at adąhzhrii dak'ąąhtii izhik nał'ya' kwaa.	I didn't see him when he was living entirely on his own.
Shitseii izhik ginkhii Loola yak'aa ginkhii googaa łyaa nakwaa.	Grandchild, the preacher Loola prayed on him, but it didn't do any good.
Gohch'it zhyaa tree haa yak'aa ginkhii aii k'iighai' zhyaa vats'a' tr'igwiinjii khehłąą ree t'ineezhik yahnyaa.	Finally he just prayed on him crying and that way he finally got better and looked the same again.
It'ee shandaa t'igwii'in googaa ree ni'ęę gwits'eedinee'yaa.	I was there while he did that, but my mother wouldn't let me go there.
Aii tr'ookit t'ahoozhik izhik gwizhrįį nał'in.	I saw him only that first time.
Aii gwats'at it'ee yi'eenji' tr'ahaandii.	From there we moved up and spent the winter there.
Khaii tthak geenjit ree.	We spent the whole winter there.

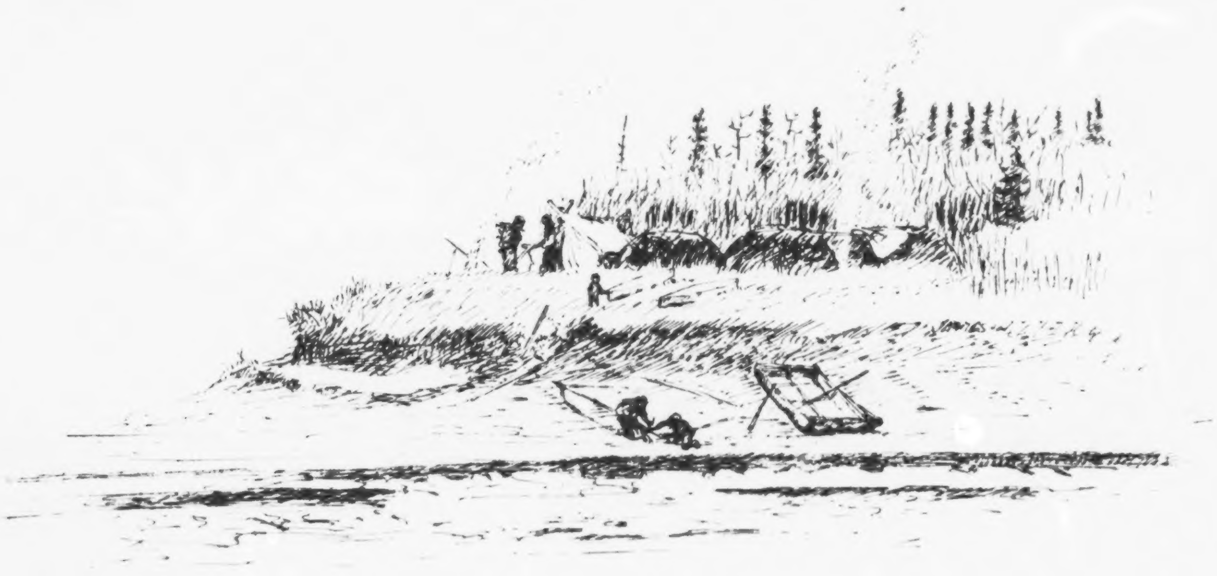
Gohch'it dee yi'eenji'
zhyaa chųų tł'it hee t'ee
it'ee ree gwahahgǫ' nigwiindhat gwiizhik at'oohju' hee
han kiriinjil chy'aa.
Akwat ts'a'
dinjik tr'aahkhok aii vadhaa k'eerąąhtii
aii t'ee tr'ihchoo tr'ahahtsyaa ghan.

Aiits'a'
yi'eenji' hee
it'ee han gwinjik kiriinjil
it'ee ree adagwaraagǫ'.

Gwiizhik tr'ihchoo dhaa k'eegaahkaii
tr'ihchoo dhaa
heelyaa k'eegaahkaii dinjik dhah.
Aii
giidachan ahtsik ts'a'
it'ee dakwagiyahchaa.
Tły'aa haa giidi' jyaa digiyah'in.

Finally way up
at the headwaters,
when the snow started to melt, then
we started going to the river.

And
whenever we killed a moose we kept the skin
so we could make a skin boat with it.
And then
way up that way
we went down to the river
to spend the spring there, waiting for break-up.
During that time they sewed the boat cover,
they sewed the moosehides
for a boat cover.
They made
that frame and
covered it with the skins.
They tied it around the top edge.



It'ee jyaa dinchy'aa ts'a'
izhik it'ee
łyaa ihtsii kwaa ree.

Akwat nihts'eegiinjil
zhyaa ree
Tł'oo K'at garahnyaa ree
dinjii gwanlįį.

Vadzaih lęįį tr'aahkhwąįį łii.

Zheegwaghoo haa
zhyaa ree gwigwiltłoo.

It'ee Tł'oo K'at gagahnyaa Old Crow
gehnjit hee.

Aii gwats'at chan nihts'eerinjil
izhik gwanaa Old Crow gwanlįį kwaa
t'oonchy'aa.

Aii gwats'an nihts'eerinjil ts'a'
New Rampart gagahnyaa
izhik chan kwaiik'it gwanlįį kwaa.

Aii
gehdit Old Rampart gagahnyaa
izhik t'ee at'oohju' hee kwaiik'it
gwanlįį łii.

It was like that
when
I was not very big.

Then they boated down
just
to the place called Tł'oo K'at,
and there were a lot of people there.

They were killing a lot of caribou.

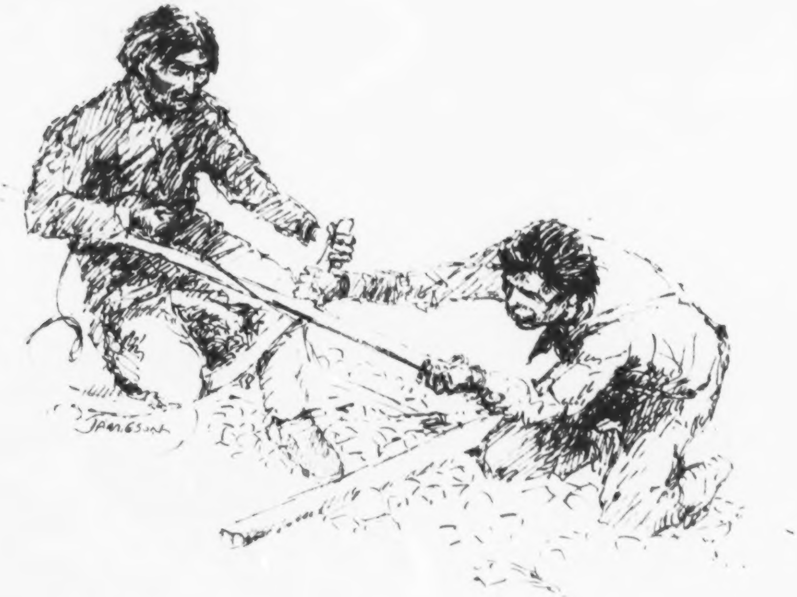
There were round houses,
all of them patched.

The place called Tł'oo K'at is past Old
Crow.

From there we moved downriver,
but at that time Old Crow wasn't
built yet.

From there we continued down and
arrived at the place called New Rampart;
there was no village there then.

And
down at what they call Old Rampart
there was already a village at that time.



Dinjii gwanlįį
ginkhii khehkwaii haa tthak
t'inchy'aa łii.

Akwat ts'a' izhik
it'ee ni'ęę
gaahts'it
neegwiinky'uu ts'a'
izhik t'ee shoondee Robert
tth'aii diihaa dhidii
Erick chan.

Vijuu gwanaa hee
gohju' hee dineełee gahaajil t'iginchy'aa.

Akwat ts'a' it'ee gintsii gwiizhik ree.

Izhik t'agwaihnyaa łyaa ihtsal gwiizhik
geegwaldak t'iihnyaa gwinzįį ganaldaii.

Akwat ts'a'
aii gwats'a' tr'ineegwiidhat hee
yee'at
chan ree t'inchy'aa hee ndak ts'a' chan ree
tr'ahaandii.

Izhik chan ree
Łindee'aahti' gwinyaa deenaadąį'
aii chan ree nał'ya'.

Aiits'a' ni'ęę shachaa shats'ąįį aii t'ee
yantł'ahkhaa t'ee.

Aiits'a' nikheełee rahoondii
shachaa gwintł'oo itree łii.

Aii shitsii
aii tr'iinin
vintł'eerahchįį chy'aa ree
aii haa ni'ęę tąįį nineehozhii.

Ni'ęę nitł'eeneeyąhchįį.

Akwat aii gwats'at yee'at
chan t'irinchy'aa tł'ee chan dzaa
chan ree.

T'ee dzaa geełeerihijyaa dzaa.

A lot of people were there,
preacher, chief, all of them
were there.

And then there
my mother
decided
to spend the fall and
my older brother Robert
was still living with us,
and Erick also.

Later on
they finally left us.

When they were big they left us.

I was small at the time I'm talking about,
but I can remember it well.

Later,
as time went on,
we moved
over there
to another place.

There too
I saw the man
they called Łindee'aahti' long ago.

My mother gave my younger brother to him.

And then we moved away;
my brother cried a lot.

We gave
the child
to my grandfather once,
but he brought him back.

He gave him back to my mother.

Then from there
we moved on and stayed another place,
and also here at this place.

We never really stayed away from
this place.

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11 Traveling around Graphite; curing by a medicine man

This account probably is set north of Graphite Point. During a winter trapping expedition, Belle and her family found a natural petroleum deposit. Belle dates this account by the death of a man named Anaazhrii (a Gwich'in version of "Henry") in Arctic Village. There were at least two men of this name around at that time, one of them the father of Elijah Henry. That winter Belle became ill and was treated by Roderick, the son of Ch'eeghwalti' (see text 4). Joe Herbert's brother John was married to Roderick's daughter, so Belle was related to Roderick by marriage. The kin terms she uses for Roderick and his wife are respect terms, *shee'ii* 'my mother's brother' and *shitsuu* 'my grandmother.'

Gwich'in medicine men got their power through spirit helpers who appeared to them in dreams, hence the expression *vah di'įį* 'he has a dream (i.e. a spirit helper)'; the word *gininlyaa* refers specifically to the dreaming of a shaman. Usually these spirits were animals or birds; apparently Roderick's helper was a bumblebee. Although many medicine men were feared because of their power to do harm, it seems that Roderick was only interested in helping people.

Khaii yeendak hidhiijil.	In the winter we went up-country.
Aii oondee	Up there
ddhah taa gweedįį	on the other side of the mountain
izhik	there's
oozhee van tsal vee hee	a little lake, and beside it
zhee goo'ąįį.	there's a house.
Aii t'ee	Then
yaaghat nitii	your father's brother,
John Herbert	John Herbert's
vidinji'	son
Paul Herbert	Paul Herbert,
aii nitii yi'eedee t'inchy'aa	your uncle was living way up there,
jyuhts'ąįį k'i'eendak	and up along that way
tąįį gogwahtsii.	they were making a trail.
Izhik	There
tąįį gwigwiłtsąįį	they made the trail
khyah t'arah'in	and they trapped;
akwat ts'a' vaa hoiizhii.	and I went with him.
Van oodee van tsal vaihnyaa	And the lake I was talking about,
aii	on it
vakak zhaa	was snow,
vikeerahaachy'aa eenjit vakak zhaa tr'oonjik.	and we took the snow to cook with.

Akhai'	Then
chųų daak'a'	it was just nasty,
jat zhyaa ree	like coal oil,
kwat ts'a'	so then
aii	we
akhaneeroonyaa neeraanjaa ts'a'	dumped it and got more but
chan t'ineerinlik	when we melted that,
chan nihk'it t'iichy'aa.	it was just the same again.
It'ee van	That lake
chųų daak'a'	seemed just like
t'inchy'aa łii.	coal oil.
Akwat ree	So
ch'adan hee zhaa neeroonjik.	we got snow from another place.
Izhik	Then
yi'eendak hee zhyaa	from that place up-country
ndak ts'a' chan neerihiidal	we kept moving on from place to place
ts'a' gohch'it oonaa neegohoojil gwich'in.	and finally we came back down, I think.
Shigii chan	My son too,
akwat yaa shaghoii	and also
choh haa ree.	my big brother-in-law.
Oondee	Up there
ddhah taa gweedii gehndee	on the other side of the mountain,
it'ee łyaa ddhah choo	a really big mountain,
izhik gwa'an	around there
ants'a'	over to
ddhah taa hidhii'oo.	the other side of the mountain we went.
Akhai' zhyaa ch'atral neech'ąh'ee	But it was very foggy,
yaaghok googaa gweech'in kwaa.	so that we couldn't even see around us.
Gohch'it zhyaa ree geełeehidhii'oo.	Finally we just left.
Aiits'a'	And then
oonaa neehidhii'oo ts'a' ree	we started back down and
googwandak goodlit łii.	the news of it got around.
Aiits'a' t'ee Marshal	So the Marshall
shachaa Paul haa	and my younger brother Paul
oondak nagaa'oo.	went up there.
Tł'ee khaii ree	Winter passed;
aaa!	ah!
Akwat ree	Then
neegwilgǫ'	the snow melted,
tł'ee ree	and after that
it'ee zhat Marshal gwąąh'ya'	the Marshall went to see it,

khyų' ree nagantii
gehdee nan ts'an khaiitł'it yahnyaa
giyahnyaa
aii coal oil.

Shitseii yaa videek'it gwanlii
t'oonchy'aa ginyaa ts'a' łyaa coal oil
geegoolii t'inchy'aa yeendit.

Akwat ts'a' ree
gik'igwahaandal gwahaatsyaa geenjit
gwihiltsąįį geegwahooldak t'iihnyaa.

Akwat ts'a' ree
it'ee ree
Marshal adąhzhrii zhat chan nidhizhii
akwat ree.

Yaa Paul Solomon yaa k'idik.

Oonaa neegii'oo ts'a'
nan datthak
t'inchy'aa yahnyaa
yahnyaa.

Akwat ts'a'
chan shin gwiindhat roo.
Shin gwiizhik tr'agwąąh'in
ji' gwiheezyaa
it'ee
izhik jyaa digwiizhik ts'a' t'ee shin
gwiindhat.

Aiits'a' khaiits'a'
naraazhrii
gwiizhik
goo'ąįį
izhik naraazhrii goo'ąįį gwiizhik chan hee
shin kak gwanlįį googaa it'ee zhyaa ii'al
haa gwits'eehidhii'oo.

Akhai' shigii nakhwaa haazhii.

Nakhwaa haazhii ts'a'
dinzhee gwats'a'
k'iindak ts'ąįį tr'ahaajil.

Akwat ts'a' jyahts'ąįį
ts'ąįį Joe Ward vatąįį.

Aii,
aii ts'an yi'eedak hee ts'a' jyahts'a'
tr'ahaajil.

but he searched for it in vain;
he said it must have seeped
out of the ground,
that coal oil.

Grandchild, it seems that is the place
they're talking about where they expect
to find coal oil.

And then
people were trying to find out about it,
that's what I'm telling about.

At that time
then
only the Marshall himself went there.

Paul Solomon came with him.

When they came back,
he said it was
all over the ground,
so he said.

At that time
the summer was over.
If they had seen it in summertime,
it would have been better,
but
when they did it, summer was over.

Then in the fall
when it was hunting
season,
then
when it was hunting season,
it was still summer, but even so we
went back on foot.

And my son went with us.

He went with us and
we traveled straight
to our house.

And on this side
was Joe Ward's trail.

Then
from there we traveled far up-country.

Akhai' ree
gwak'at deeraajil.

Ts'a' dak ts'a'
k'ǫǫ k'iidaa gwiin'ee gwaghai' dak tr'eedaa
tǫǫ hee.

Aaa! shitseii
it'ee
tr'ihęęhaa
nigwiindhat gwiizhik
nihkhan'oo.

Aaa! łąįį vagwaahtł'oo neekwąįį
ree nihts'įį gavoodhiinjik
gwiizhik jyaa digii'in.

Aaa! ch'aadoo,
ch'aadoo łąą deenaadąį' ch'ahk'ii oo'ok
deeneeyahahchik gwinyaa
gwik'it łąą łąįį nąįį
dehthat googaa neeshagahahchik
googaa gįviinjik kwaa.

Gwiizhik it'ee tǫǫ nagwaanąįį.

Aaa!

Yaaghok googaa gweech'in kwaa.

Ninghuk hee jeiinchy'aa gohch'it shigii
shak'at deeneehozhii.

Akhai' ree
tǫǫ gwanlįį ts'a' ch'eegiyiłk'ee łii.

Akwat ts'a' diti'
ts'eehoozhii ts'a' izhik
tr'ąąhaa.

Akwat chan hee neehoozhii
it'ee yeedee chųų daak'a' tr'ahaa'yaa
gwik'ee gwiriheendaii ghan.

Akwat yeenjit
Graphite gehdee van choo
k'iidąą ddhah nin'ee juhts'ąįį van choo
dha'ąįį.

Aii dak naa'ai' k'i'eedak gweedįį.

Izhik hee
gwiizhik yaa nitsii ree
łyaa gavaa goodhaii haaljyaa
nitsii zhyaa vigwitr'it goodlit t'ee.

Then
we approached a place.

Up there
a little creek came down, and we passed
it in the darkness.

Ah! grandchild,
then
we were going to camp
when we encountered
a bull and cow moose mating.

Ah! we had two strong dogs
and I grabbed one in each hand
while they did like this *(gestures)*.

Ah! they shot
and they shot, just like they used to signal
in the old days,
making a great noise,
while those dogs
dragged me right off my feet,
but I never let go of them.

Meanwhile it turned dark.

Ah!

We couldn't even see close by.

After a long time my son came back.

But
it was too dark and they had missed.

So then
he went back to his father and
we made camp.

He left again
to try and see
if he could find the coal oil place.

Up there
back of Graphite is a big lake,
on the side where the mountain ridge
comes down.

At the end of the lake
the trail goes up.

And while
we were there, your grandfather
said it looks like I'll be stuck with them,
so your grandfather just got busy.

Zhyaa khan hee
zhyaa ree gwaakwaa ts'a' ninghit
  gwats'a' rahaajil.

Akwat zhyaa ree nihkheerihę̨ę̨daa gwiłtsą̨į̨į̨.

It'ee nihkheeriinjil ts'a' zhik van choo
  vaihnyaa
aii dak naa'ai'
zhyaa juhts'ą̨į̨į̨ hee neeriijil.

Vik'eevee
aiits'a' gohch'it
yaaghat Graphite gehdit
yi'eedi'
jyaa doonchy'aa izhik
deetthan
chan tą̨į̨h nin'ee izhik k'inidik nitsii.

It'ee izhik chan naahaa.

Aaa!

He just decided
it was no use for us to go that far.

So he had us turn back.

Then we turned back to that big lake
  I mentioned,
and at its end
we came to rest.

We went around its shore
and finally
there past Graphite
up that way
the way it is there,
up the slope
is a little hill, and there your grandfather
  stopped.

He camped right there.

Ah!

Aiits'a' aii teedik
yeedihjyaa ts'ąįį
chan te'ehjik gwinjyaa
aii dįįnaa'ai' izhik it'ee tąįh kiin'ee izhik
  t'ee *[inaudible]* gagahnyaa
izhik
dįįnaa'ai' izhik teedik łąą kiriinjil.

Aiits'a'
it'ee tǫǫ goo'ąįį ts'a'
izhik chan ree tr'ąąhaa.

Aaa!

Gwintł'oo ahshii
zhah choo neech'ee'aa tłik.

Akhai' chan ree
shreedaraazhik
vikeeriilchy'aa tł'ee ree neerahoojil.

Neereedaa
aiits'a' teedik
needyaa ts'a'
gohch'it zhyaa ree dinzhee gęhdee chy'aa
  zhyaa ree k'iidąą ree zhyaa ree
  kineediizhii.

Now a long slough
goes alongside the river
and the slough
goes up to that hill they call *(inaudible)*,
and there
we came out beside the river.

Then
it was dark so
we camped there.

Ah!

It really snowed hard,
and the snow was slushy.

Despite that
we got our things ready,
cooked, and then left.

We were walking along
then beside the river
and he was walking ahead, and
finally he came out right in view of
  our house.

Akwat ts'a' aii tł'oo
kak gwachoo goo'ąįį chy'aa gwak'aa k'iidąą
ree it'ee dinzhee
gwak'at deeneeraajil.

Aaa! shitseii.
Ineeshizhii chy'aa ts'a'
hee shaa nigwidiin'in.

Akwat ts'a'
Joe Ward shigii haa launch oodi' gihiłłit łii.
Doctor eenjit t'igii'in
akhai'
shalak nał'in ji' sheenjit gwiheezyaa jyaa nyaa yahnyaa.
Aiits'a' nitsii
t'ee
shaa nihts'ee neetr'ihchoo'ąhłit.
Izhik khaii tthak yits'i' oodi' kogwił'ąįį.

Aaa! shitseii, gwintsal niinghuk k'eedhishizhii t'oonchy'aa.
Oodit
teeshiłchįį ts'a' nji' ts'a' Yukon
chan
vadzaih keehaazhii.
Aii shoondee Esaias aii nąįį haa t'ii'in.
Aaa! shitseii, vadzaih lęįį diłkhwąįį.

Akwat
yaaghat
chan dehtsii gaa shi'ii roo.
Aii dehtsii zhit zhyaa ree vadzaih deedąą'aii.
Gwizhinlii łii ts'a' it'ee chan yeenji' neehoozhii.
Gwiizhik it'ee yee'at gwits'eehoozhii.

Aiits'a'
Esau William chan shak'ąąhtii
John Fredson vanandaii aii chan neekwąįį shak'ąąhtii gwiłtsąįį.
Gwiizhik t'ee shigii niveh dinjii tr'iłtsąįį
aii it'ee shriit'ahtsii
jyaa dąhtsii roo.

Then, where there is
a big meadow we arrived,
and we went up
to our house.

Ah! grandchild.
We got home and
that's all I remember.

After that
Joe Ward and my son took the launch down river.
They went down for the doctor
but
he said "I want to see my friend."
So your grandfather
then
took me down in a boat.
He stayed away from home all that winter down there.

Ah! grandchild, I walked a long way.
Southward
he took me and then up the Yukon
also
to hunt caribou.
He went with my older brother Esaias and his people.
Ah! grandchild, he killed a lot of caribou.

And
there
I even had a platform cache.
That cache was just full of caribou.
He put it in there and after that he went over to our home.
Then he came back over.

And then
Esau Williams was taking care of me,
and John Fredson, you know him, he told the two of them to take care of me.
Meanwhile my son became a soldier;
he was already rather
big at that time.

Aiits'a' aii
izhik dąį' it'ee
yeendee Neets'it Gwich'in tee Anaazhrii
gwinyaa gwiintth'ak
aii izhik dąį' t'ee
vakwaa.

Aaa! shitseii
gohch'it
khaii datthak
gwitł'ee t'ee neegwiighyaa tł'ee gwats'a' tthak zhat t'ihchy'aa.

Akwat ts'a' t'ee
Roderick gwinyaa gwiintth'ak aii łyaa dįhch'i' dazhan t'arahnyaa.

Dįhch'i' dazhan choo nilįį.

Aii vitr'injaa t'ee yee'at, yeedi'
Mary Tsoo gwinyaa gwiintth'ak aii vaanoodlit yeedhidii aii yee'at diinahkak gehdit gwidįį gwich'ii.

Aii haa neehoozhii łii shitsuu aii
Roderick vitr'injaa.

Aiits'a' drin tsal ts'a' nigwiindhat gwiizhik ree
k'eenidik łii.

Yaagha'
William Salmon chan vaanandaii shoondee.

Vijuu Eliza
chan vaanandaii
aii t'ee vakąį' haa gwich'ii.

Aiits'a' shitsuu k'eenidik łii
it'ee ch'ijuk shigweech'in łii t'ee.

Aiits'a' noonlyaa zhak shagwahtthaa łii
gwiizhik yee k'inidik
łii. Shitsuu ree
k'eenidik łii
aii shitsuu ree
k'eenidik łii ts'a' t'ee sheejii haa shats'a' gahaa'oo łii.

Aiits'a' shaa gaadii ts'a'
"Shitseii,

At that time
then
up around Arctic Village a man called Anaazhrii, you heard of him,
around that time
he died.

Ah! grandchild,
finally
I stayed there all winter
until it got warm, all that time I was like that.

Well now,
you've heard about Roderick; he was really a strong medicine man.

He was a big medicine man.

And his wife was down there below us,
they called her Mary Tsoo, you know, she married a white man, and she lived down there below us.

It seems Roderick's wife
had left with her.

And just before Christmas,
she came back.

Now that
William Salmon, you know him, he's my older brother.

His older sister Eliza,
you know her too,
she stayed with Roderick.

When my grandmother came back,
I guess I didn't look too good to her.

I was really going down,
I guess,
when she arrived.
My grandmother
came back,
my grandmother
came back and then she came down to see me with my older sister.

They were visiting with me and
"Grandchild,

oondaa nakhwaa neiindii," ree shahnyaa.	come back with us," she said to me.
It'ee dakąį' sheenjit ts'a' ginkhe' łii t'ee.	She apparently had talked with her husband about me.
Aiitł'ee łyaa neeshraałchy'aa googaa oondaa vaa hoiizhii.	After that I was really doing poorly, but went up anyway.
Aiits'a' oondaa k'eihdik shee'ii ree.	And then I arrived at my uncle's house.
Shee'ii ts'a' nashagąąhchįį.	They took me to my uncle.
Sheenjit gwitr'it t'agwahah'yaa gaashagąhdaii.	They let me know he was going to work on me.
Izhik oondaa tth'aii gavaa nihdyaa teetł'an gwandaa zhyaa it'ee "Shitseii nee'ii zhyaa nee'ii jyaa danahah'yaa," t'igwinyaa ree shahnyaa.	On the way up there, when we had gone about halfway, "Grandchild, your mother's brother, your mother's brother is going to treat you," she said to me.
Kwat ts'a' łyaa ree geet'įįhthan kwaa.	Well, I didn't like the idea.
Geet'įįhthan kwaa ts'a' ree it'ee googaa vaa hoiizhii.	I didn't like it but I went with them.
Aiits'a' vats'a' niizhii.	And then I came to him.
"Vats'a' hinhaii," shagahnyaa ts'a' t'ee gwik'it t'ishi'in.	"Go to him," they told me, and so I did it.
Aiits'a' ree ginkhii googaa kwaa.	And then he didn't even talk.
Aiits'a' "Shee'ii Christian inlįį shant'ee gwik'it t'ihchy'aa.	Then, "My uncle, you are a Christian, and I am the same.
Łi'haa oots'it kwaa haa shats'a' tr'ihiindal ji' gwizhrii gwik'it t'igwihee'yaa," vaihnyaa.	If you are really and truly going to cure me, let it be so," I said to him.
Aaha' nyaa.	"Yes," he said.
Aiits'a'	Then

zhyaa ree
ch'iheelyaa ts'a'
gohłii t'ashahah'yaa t'iginyaa yiihthan.

Akwat ts'a' t'ashahnyaa
"Vah ishi'įį łaa vaa ch'ijuk t'ishi'in kwaa," yahnyaa.

"Ti'yąą zhrii vaa
ch'ijuk t'ishi'ya'," nyaa.

"Aiits'a' vah nizįį
di'įį nąįį łi'haa
gook'aa vaa daa'ąįį gwanlįį t'oonchy'aa."

Aii gwik'it t'inchy'aa k'it ree t'inyaa.

Akwat ts'a'
oodi'
shizhee gineegwał'ąįi ts'a' ree
gwintsal galdaii tł'ee noiichii.

Tr'iinin it'ee naachįį.

Gwiizhik zhyaa ree
ch'ęędzit choh
haahchik tth'ak
ch'ęędzit choh haahchik tth'ak ts'a'
vik'eedzii'ałtthaii.

Shitseii gwintł'oo shaa nagwaatsi'.

Yee'at k'ii'an chan zhyaa ree dinjii choh
zhyaa ree vakak ch'ęędzit ghoo
vakak doonchy'aa
aii k'it t'inchy'aa vakak tthak jyaa doonchy'aa.

Aaa!

Jidii zhyaa dzaa ts'ąįį haa kho'it diljik haa cheehoozhii.

Aiits'a' ree
it'ee ree
iichį'.

Nihkaa vanh khan neeshahaan'yaa yuu shahnyaa roo.

Dhałts'ik t'inyaa googaa khan naal'ya'
chan hee ree shitsuu sheejii haa zhat gaadii.

I just
thought he would sing
and do something to me.

But he said to me,
"I have a dream, but I do no wrong with it.

Only my father,
I did wrong with him," he said.

"Now the ones who have
a very good dream
are strong in it, that is so."

He spoke as if he were like that.

So then
I went back down
to my own house and
after staying awake a little while, I fell asleep.

The child had gone to sleep already.

Meanwhile,
I heard the sound
of a big bumblebee,
I heard the noise of a bumblebee and
I heard it buzzing around.

My grandchild, a great vision appeared to me.

Right outside I saw a big man,
with the appearance of a bumblebee,
his outside was like that,
he was just like that all over him.

Ah!

He held something at his side with his hand, and thereupon he went outside.

And then
then
I slept.

He had told me to come back quickly the next morning.

Even though I was sick, I went back to him fast,
and my grandmother and my older sister were sitting there.

Aiits’a’ ree
“Nik’ee k’eegwiichy’aa giky’anjik?”
jyaa chan ree shahnyaa.

“Zhyaa ree khanoiichįį zhyaa ree ch’ęędzit ghoo
choo ree zhyaa
haahchik.

Yee’at k’ii’an chan dinjii choo nilįį ts’a’ cheehoozhii vakak tthak kwat zhyaa ch’ęędzit ghoo
kak doonchy’aa gwik’it t’inchy’aa jidii dee haa kho’it diljik haa cheehoozhii,” jyaa ree jihnyaa.

“Haa!

Zhyaa anazhan gwich’in yuu” jyaa shahnyaa

“Aii zhyaa
dazhan choo nąįį gaa
vaa ts’a’ tr’ihjii googaa duuyee
giiky’anjii aii chan iky’aanjik.”

Jyaa ree zhyaa shahnyaa.

Shitseii
gwintł’oo
khaiinjich’igwiidhat shats’an gwanlįį.

Zhyaa gwats’at ree
K’eegwaadhat t’aii zhik shaa daatth’aa.

Tr’iinin shats’an tr’agwahkhit dąį’ shatthal
shats’at dhaa haa ładąąhzhį’
aii nihghoo khot’aii aii teet’įį tr’iinin gikidhatthaii łeegwiłch’aa
ginyaa doctor nąįį
aiits’a’ aii gwizhit khaiinjich’ashadhat.

Aii jyaa dishinlik gwats’an k’eegwiichy’aa
neegwahaljii kwaa.

Gwintł’oo shee’ii gwileii
neeshraahchy’aa gwiizhik
vak’aa gwaa’ąįį
aii ree zhyaa dinjii yaghaih ninidik k’it t’ii’in dlok haa yaghaih ch’ahantik jyaa ree dii’in.

Aii jyaa diizhik gwiizhik t’ee vizhii k’igwaanąįį giyahnyaa t’inchy’aa.

So then,
“Did you find out anything?”
he just said to me.

“I was just going to bed when
there was a noise
of a big bumblebee.

Then it became a big man right outside there and what he had on made him look like a bumblebee;
he was holding onto something, I don’t know what, and then he went outside,” I said to him.

“Haa!

You must be a medicine woman,” he told me.

“With that thing
I have cured
a lot of big medicine men but
they haven’t found out about it, and you have found out about it.”

That’s what he said to me.

Grandchild,
I was really
suffering a lot.

But from then on
the strength of the Lord was in me.

When I was in labor, my intestine
and my womb were connected,
so that the child tore me badly,
that’s what the doctors said,
and so I was in very severe pain.

But since he treated me, nothing
has ever bothered me.

My uncle was very
poor, but
the power was on him;
when a man walked up to him, he just looked him up and down, smiling.

And when he did that, they say, he would faint.

Aaa! shitseii gwintł'oo khaii tthak neeshraałchy'aa googaa it'ee shee'ii jyaa teeshiłthat ts'a' it'ee gwintsal gwinghyaa gwiizhik it'ee yee'at gwits'ee shihiłchįį.	Ah! grandchild, really all winter I was poor, but my uncle treated me and when it got a little warmer, he took me back home.
Aits'a' jyaa dihchy'aa łyaa doctor googaa naal'ya' kwaa ts'a' jyaa dihchy'aa. Sheenjit gwinzįį ts'a' gwizhrii t'ihchy'aa ts'a' tth'aii hee nihk'it.	And just as I am now, even though I didn't see a doctor, I'm this way. I was fine, and I'm still just like that.
K'eegwaadhat shits'inyaa aii ts'ąįį gwintł'oo shee'ii jyaa dishinlik t'inchy'aa.	The Lord helped me, and also my uncle treated me that way.
Aii t'ee shitsuu veh'an it'eełee tth'aii gwihdaii gwiizhik chan lee shee'ii vigii shandaa chan neeshraahchy'aa gwilįį nyaa haa deenyaa li'.	So because of my grandmother I am still alive; she didn't want to see a child of her uncle's family suffer.
Aaa!	Ah!
Gwintł'oo neeshraałchy'aa gwiizhik shitsuu shintsąį' chy'aa.	I was really in bad shape but my grandmother wouldn't let me go.
Akwat t'ee shitseii gwintł'oo than hee kheegwitr'it t'agwal'in.	Now, grandchild, I was working all by myself.
Khaiinji' adach'adooldhat googaa łąą ree gwinzįį ganaldaii kwaa gwiizhik zhyaa ree nakhwalak gwandak ts'a' shah'ee ts'a'.	I went through a lot of suffering, but I really don't remember well; but our friend told me to tell the story.
It'ee ree jyaa dagwąhtsii ree gwaldak ako'.	Now that's all I'm going to tell for now.

12 Burial customs

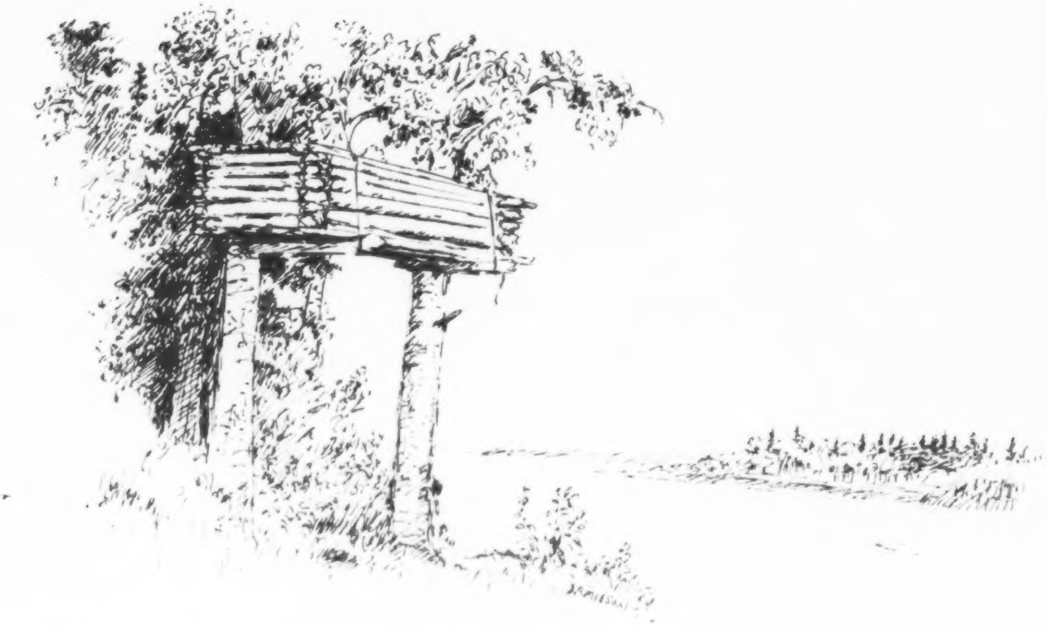
Belle talks about several ways the dead were treated before missionaries arrived. The elevated burials which were apparently most frequent in her youth came into practice after axes became available (McKennan 1965:60). The coffins she describes were made of split logs lashed together with rawhide and elevated on posts. She mentions the beads buried with the dead in this manner; there are a number of stories from different parts of Alaska that mention the danger of taking burial offerings, so apparently it was a temptation to children wherever such burials were made. Belle says that cremation started after elevated burial and before interment; according to McKennan and Osgood, cremation was an infrequent practice and a mark of honor to the dead. In fact, interment had always been practiced in Gwich'in country, even before the elevated burial, as archaeologists have discovered; but in ancient times the dead were not buried in coffins.

Belle says that modern-style burial started around the time she was born, and that Charley Crow's mother was the first to have a Christian funeral. Charley Crow must have been born around 1850. At the same time, missionaries began to discourage people from making extreme displays of mourning, no doubt because the Christian religion teaches that the dead go on to a better existence and that people should accept death. Many traditional Native social patterns which missionaries considered alien to their own culture, such as mourning displays and the potlatch, were thus discouraged.

Dachan tyąą tr'ahtsii	They made a coffin
dzaa	here
jyaa dinchy'aa.	like this.

Akwat ree	Well,
dzaa vats'at	here on the bottom
dzaa chan	and here
datthak	all
dachan k'iizhaa	the sticks went up,
dachan dǫǫ hee t'arah'in yi'eedak hee zheet'ach'arahtthak.	there were four sticks, one at each corner.
Aii t'ee zheet'ach'arahtthak ts'a'	Then they tied them together and
vitsįį nihts'įį ree	where they came to a point
tły'aa haa t'agayah'in	they bound it with rope,
dohłįį jidii haa	I suppose, what else
t'igiyahah'yaa gǫǫ.	would they use?

Akwat	Now
dachan tyąą jyaa dirinlik łii yeendaa	they made coffins like that down there
jyaa dinchy'aa tth'aii	over that way, when
theetanlą́įį kwaa dąį' it'ee	there was no water there yet,
gwats'an ihłįį t'oonchy'aa.	while I was alive.
Ch'ivin tły'ah t'eegąąhchy'aa.	They used a skin rope.



Aadzii ree
dǫǫ dilii ts'a'
tr'ąąhtły'aa.

Geetak hee five
geetak hee six
dohchyaa tr'oonyaa gwik'it
tr'ąąhtły'aa.

Aii haa
nints'a' giyeełihteech'ąąhtł'uk.

Oondaa
aii dachan tyąą aii chan dachan haa nihts'įį
diheechaa chan vataant'aii ts'a'
oodak
ninghit hee roo.

Yeendok dee'an jidii t'inchy'aa
łyaa gwidheetaa ninghit ts'at
izhik gwanaa gwats'at t'ihchy'aa.

Akwat ts'a' izhik
łąą teetł'an hee t'ee jyaa dinch'ii nan kak
naatth'at łii t'ee.

They took four
strands of caribou skin
and braided them.

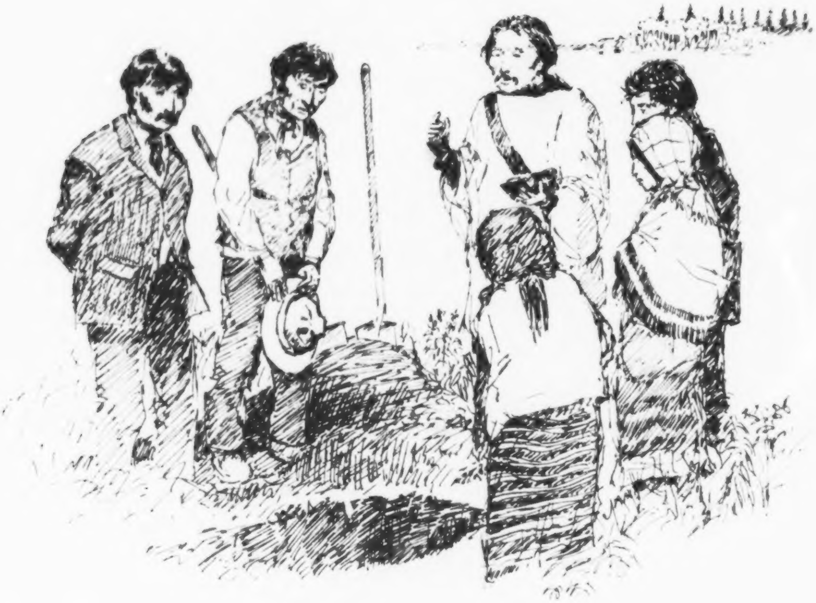
Or sometimes five,
or sometimes six,
depending on how wide
they wanted to braid it.

With that
they would tie on a crosspiece.

Across
the coffin at each end of the crosspiece
was tied a long cord, with which
they could hang it
up high.

It was up over there,
quite far across the water,
during my lifetime.

And apparently
there is one there that fell to the ground.



Vakak
vizhit zhyaa naagąįį choh giltan
vatł'an naa'ai'.

On top
inside it was half full of beads.

Aii
vazhraih djį
khaii
ts'ik
khanaat'aii
aii haa tr'an'yuu tr'iinin tr'inlii ts'a'
naagąįį
ił tr'inghan aii diiyehghan nitł'ineeraazhik.

Those
narrow
roots
hanging down from the bank—
we took them when we were kids and
made strings of beads
and gave them to our parents.

Akhai' oondaa neegiihaatłak.

And they threw them in the river.

Izhik t'ee dachan tyąą vizhee
t'ach'arąhtthaii naatth'at łii nał'yą'.

That's when I saw that kind of coffin.

Akwat ts'a' t'ee chan
dinjii tr'ahk'an
gwizhrii ts'a' vizhee t'ach'arahtthak
nan zhit hee akwaa.

And later
they burned bodies;
they didn't yet bury them
in the ground.

Aii gwizhrii ree gaashandaii.

Khaluugikyaa ts'a'
dinjii gwizhit gahchik izhik gaagiindaii kwaa ts'a'
jyaa digii'in.

Shigwiheelyaa gwats'a'
ninghit kwaa gwiizhik it'ee.

Shitseii Esau William
juk nah'in
aii vahan
t'ee shitsiindaa oozhii.

Aii vahan
gwandaii ndaa hąą'aa izhik it'ee nan zhit
dinjii tr'ahchik t'oonchy'aa.

Izhik gwats'an vahan
ndaa ree vahan niindhat
vahan aii vahan aii t'ee shaaghan Ch'ighik Gwadhaa oozhii.

Aii niindhat
niheedhaa gwats'a' ree Charley Crow vahan
aii vanarąąhjik vak'aa tr'iginkhe'.

Aii gwats'an it'ee dinjii nan zhit rahchik t'oonchy'aa.

Aii ree
vitsuu gwandaii vandaa anarąąhjik t'inchy'aa vahan.

Esau
William
łyaa ninghit gwats'an t'inchy'aa
jyaa doonchy'aa t'oonchy'aa.

Shitseii izhik t'ee
gwintł'oo gogwaahk'ik
digiki' gikhyąą ts'a' kǫ'
k'aa neegihiidal.

Kǫ' k'at niłaraanyaa
haa niłiriighan k'it t'igwii'in gwinyaa.

Aii
ginkhii
gwits'eech'ee'yaa haa jyaa digwii'in kwaa goodlit t'oonchy'aa.

That's all I know.

They didn't know how
to dig a grave and put a body in it,
that's why they did that.

Just before I was born
they were doing that.

My grandchild Esau William
that you see now,
his mother
was named Shitsiindaa.

And his mother
was living, and when she died
they started burying people in the ground.

His mother's mother was there
when his mother died;
his mother's mother was named Ch'ighik Gwadhaa.

Before she died
Charley Crow's mother died,
and they had a funeral for her, which they had never done before.

From that time on they buried people.

Now
his grandmother
was living when they buried his mother.

Esau
Williams
has lived a very long time,
it is like that.

Grandchild, then
they built a big fire
and burned their hair,
and people went into the fire.

They held each other back from the fire,
it was just as if they were fighting.

Those
missionaries
prevented them from doing that, and they stopped.

Gwintł'oo dinjii khaiinji' nała'aajik gwinyaa t'oonchy'aa jyaa digii'in aii haa.	People really suffered from doing that, they say.
Aii yaaghat Old Crow vijuu gwi'ee t'igii'in gwich'in.	It was over there at Old Crow where they did that, I think.
Aii nee'ii Charley t'ee vanandaii roo aii vahan t'ee vak'aa girinkhe' hagaa ts'a' vanarąąhjik gwinyaa t'oonchy'aa.	Your uncle Charley, you know him, his mother had a funeral and was buried in the ground.
Łyaa ninghit kwaa hęę yaaghat Esau vahan aii gwats'an sheek'aii Fannie vaanandaii aii dink'ighit gwiizhik it'ee aii shaaghan Ch'ighik Gwadhaa vaihnyaa ijii. Charley Crow vahan aii vahan t'aihnyaa.	Not very long ago that Esau's mother's daughter, my aunt Fannie, you remember her, while she was growing up, there was that old lady Ch'ighik Gwadhaa I mentioned. Charley Crow's mother's mother is the one I'm talking about.
Aii niindhat łuh zhit rąhchįį ts'a' vak'aa girinkhe' gwinyaa.	She died and they buried her and preached over her.
Akwat ts'a' izhik gwiizhik it'ee Fannie chan aii shaaghan viyeets'a' k'aa girinkhe' ts'a' viyeets'i' ch'ihłak kit nilįį t'ee yaaghat deenaadąį' chan Shahnyaati' vijuu aii vigii ch'ihłak t'ee yuunjik łii sheek'aii Fannie.	Then also at that time Fannie too, that old lady's firstborn daughter was buried with a funeral in the same place, and then a long time ago too Shahnyaati''s younger sister, her son married my aunt Fannie.
It'ee aii t'ee William Ch'atthaiindee oozhii. Vijuu aii niindhat aii nan zhit gąhchįį.	Now his name was William Ch'atthaiindee. His younger sister died and they buried her.

Akwat ts'a' aii
Vats'a' Khehkwaii oozhii.

Shaaghan Ch'ighik Gwadhaa viyeets'i' kit
aii t'ee
Shahnyaati' vigii
ch'ihłee yuunjik.

Akwat aii
shee'ii aii yeedi' teetsii nihts'eenzhii akhai' izhik hee
vakwaa.

Aiits'a' chan sheek'aii Fannie chan yee'at nich'it viti'
Peter
aii viti' Viiluu oozhii chan neeyuunjik
Fannie.

Aiits'a' Peter t'ee vagoodlit aii gii t'inchy'aa yee'at.

Akwat tł'ee chan hee shoondee Ginnis neeyuunjik nahąą.

Gwadatthak jyaa doonchy'aa gwaatth'aa ts'a' ree.

It'ee
gwats'an t'ee dinjii neegahk'an kwaa.

Aii shitsuu
Ch'ighik Gwadhaa viyeets'i' vanarąąhjik vak'aa girinkhe'
aii gwats'at t'ee dinjii neegahk'an kwaa.

Dinjii haa dachan tyąą deerichik chan kwaa.

Gwintł'oo tr'iinin ihłįį hee dinjii igwiinjii hee dinjii vadrąįį t'igwii'in kwaa googaa ree
treeghyaa dha'ąįį t'igwinyaa roo.

Juk ji' zhyaa ree idigihideeghaa dǫhłii.

Zhyaa ree dinjii tr'aghan ts'a' jyaa digwii'in roo.

Izhik gwanaa duuyee dinjii ninghit t'igwinyaa.

And
her name was Vats'a' Khehkwaii.

Old lady Ch'ighik Gwadhaa's oldest daughter
then
married one of
Shahnyaati''s sons.

Then
my uncle traveled downriver but
he died there.

And then my aunt Fannie married Viiluu,
and they had a son,
Peter,
who is the father of that young woman over there.

After Fannie got married Peter was born, and the young woman over there is Peter's daughter.

Later she got married again to my older brother Ginnis, you see.

And so the years passed by as these things were done.

Then
from then on they didn't burn bodies any more.

My grandmother
Ch'ighik Gwadhaa's daughter was buried with a funeral,
and from then on they didn't burn bodies.

They didn't make elevated burials any more either.

When I was quite small, anytime someone got hurt, even people who had nothing to do with it
used to cry a lot.

If that happened now, I'll bet they'd kill themselves.

Nowadays people just kill each other.

In the old days people hardly ever died except of natural causes.

Zhyaa ree nin chiits'it hee nin gwandaii k'it t'iginchy'aa nats'aa.

Akwat jyahts'a' ree.

Akwat shitseii
khaiits'a'
gwizhrii
khehłan t'iginchy'aa aii t'ee dachaaval gaghan aih haa.

It'ee khaii
tthak dąhthee gwahahgǫ' gwats'a' tr'eenjyaa t'igwinyaa.

Akwat aii khaii it'ee gwiighyaa gwiizhik.

Aaa!
shitseii
łaa k'iindaa gwahgǫ' k'iindaa nagadal izhik t'ee dagwagwaagǫ' chan tr'ii tr'iheeghaa.

Akwat aii tr'ih gaghan gigiindak ts'a' gwitł'ee khaiits'a' neegwiheek'al gwats'a' tthak chan zhyaa.

Nats'ahts'a'
nin gwandaii k'it t'iginchy'aa nats'aa dee gahahts'ik
jyaa diginchy'aa gwaatth'aa
gwitsii dzaa tr'agwandaii t'oonchy'aa roo.

Zhyaa khik khehłan hee t'oonchy'aa ts'a' khagwitr'it t'aragwaa'in
gwintł'oo kwaa goodlit t'oonchy'aa.

Aaa! shitseii gwintł'oo
tr'injaa nąįį khaiinji'hojik t'oonchy'aa.

Shandaa googaa.

It'ee.

They lived as the animals do out there, how would they die?

That's the way it was.

Well, grandchild,
in the fall
was the only time
they stayed in one place, to make toboggans and snowshoes.

Then in winter
until the spring thaw, people moved around all the time.

All winter long until it got warm.

Ah!
grandchild,
they walked around all winter until it was time to camp for break-up and make canoes.

After they made the canoes, they canoed around until fall time.

How was it,
they lived as the animals do, how would they get sick;
that's the way it was, but
today we live here on the point.

We just stay in one place and work for ourselves,
we don't do much any more.

Ah! grandchild,
women really suffered a lot then.

Even during my lifetime.

Now.

Chalkyitsik on the Black River, 1981, looking toward the mountains to the northeast. The school is to the left and the village in the center, with Belle's cabin (hidden in this photograph) situated at lower right, at the edge of the village. The slough appears in the center foreground.

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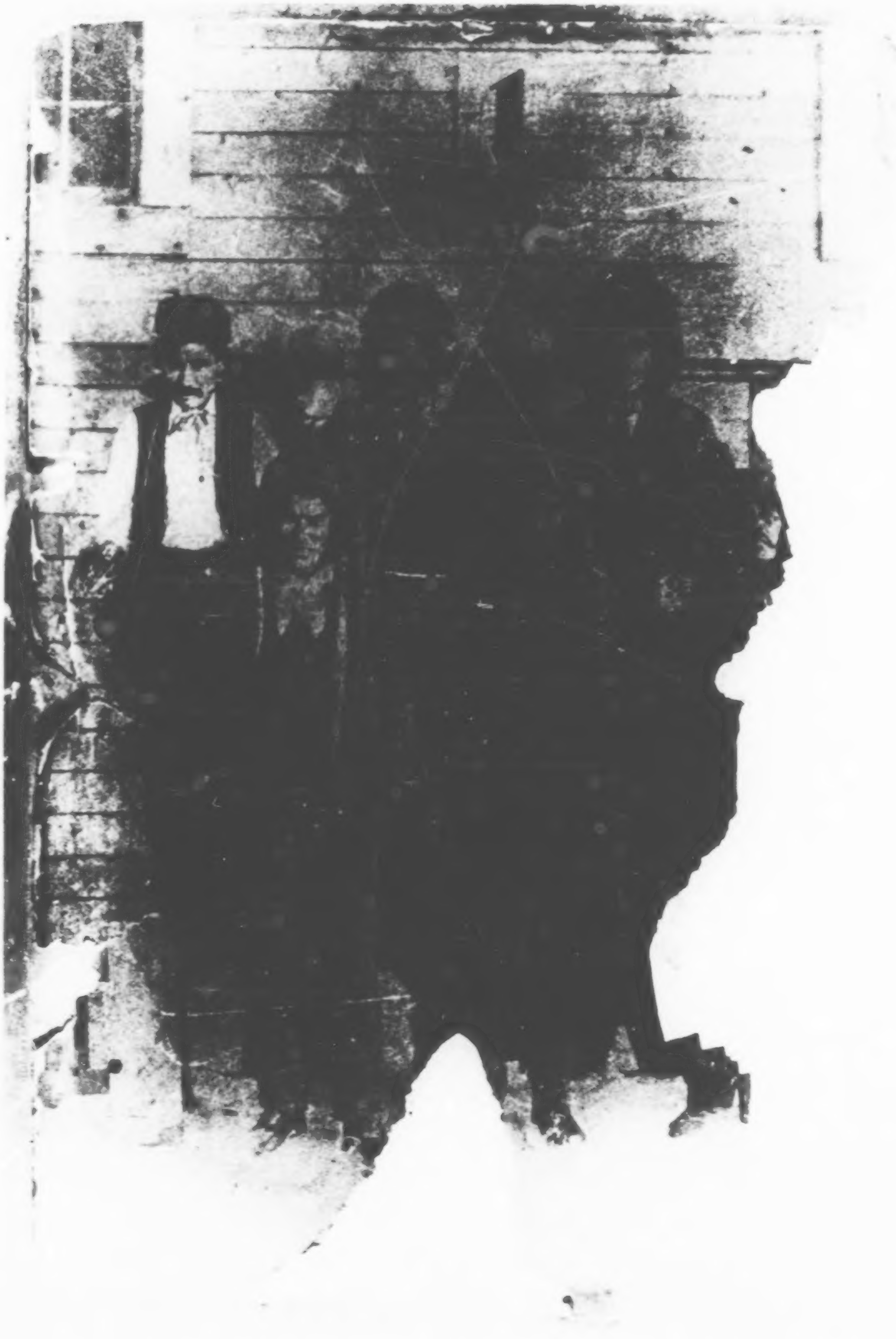
An unidentified group photographed along the Porcupine River.

The seated man holding the child is Joe Herbert; Belle stands at left center.

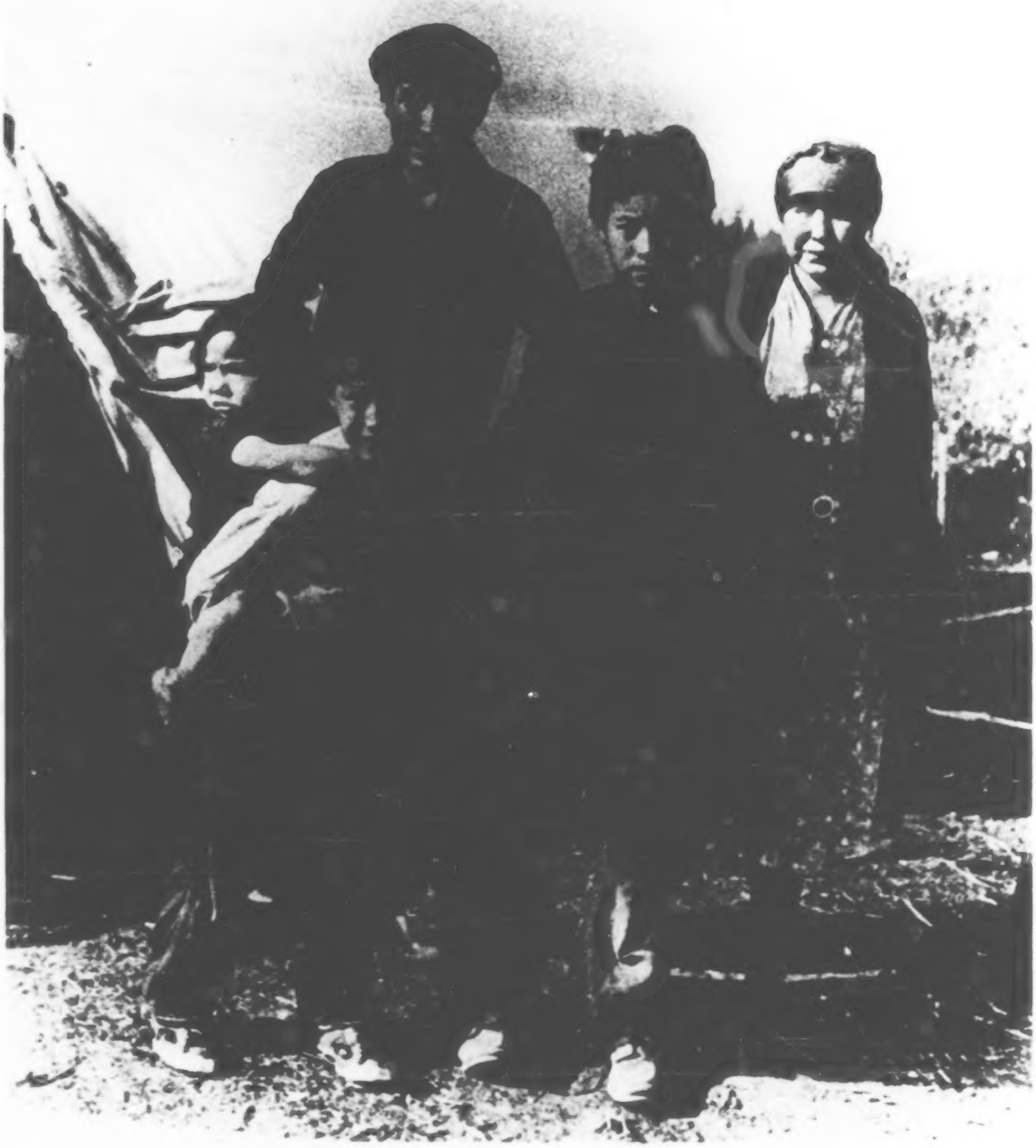
Traders on the Porcupine, perhaps at New Rampart.

Belle and Joe Herbert.

An unidentified group, photographed either at the mouth of the Salmon Trout River or at Rampart House.



Belle's older brother Erick (top center); David Wallis (top right); Joe Herbert (bottom left); and John Herbert (bottom center).



Sam and Jenny Herbert and their sons John and Joe; Belle identified the little girl as Percy's daughter.

Chalkyitsik, early morning.

Belle Herbert's cabin in Chalkyitsik.

A cache in Chalkyitsik.

Belle's home.

Belle at home.

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June
25

13 Skin-tanning, rabbit-snaring, and old-time cooking

The skin-tanning tools are illustrated in the book *How I Tan Hides* by Katherine Peter (ANLC, 1980). The houses Belle is talking about in this account are the big skin-covered lodges which were usually inhabited by two families (hence the expression "opposite each other"), often an older couple and their daughter and her husband. Sod houses were also built. Belle goes on to tell about rabbit-snaring, an important way children and women contributed to the family food supply, and about how rabbits and other meat were cooked without pots.

Aii ch'adhaa giitįį shrigwilik giyahtthaii aiitł'ee t'ee ch'anghwaa haa zhrii.	They cleaned the flesh side of the skin with a bone scraper, and after that just with an iron scraper.
Ch'agahdzii kwaa shrii choo kwaa nats'aa dee.	They didn't scrape it with a knife--they didn't have one.
Ch'anghwah haa jyaa digii'in ts'a' vadzaih dhaa aii zhyaa jeiinchy'aa dazhoo ts'a' giyahkhii.	With an iron scraper they did it, and they tanned the caribou skin just as it was, fur and all.
Shant'ee googaa dazhoo ałkhii t'oonchy'aa roo.	Even I myself have tanned hides with the fur on that way.
Kwat jyaa digii'in aiits'a' shrii choo goodlit gwats'an t'ee ch'adhaa tr'ahdzii ts'a' jyaa ree digwii'in ts'a' vitii googaa chan ree jyaa daragwah'in haa vitįį tthak shririgwilii roo.	Now since we have had big knives, we scrape the flesh side in that way, we take the dark layer off and make it real clean.
Gwehkįį t'ee ch'angwal ree nehtthaa tr'ahtsii aii zhrii.	Before that they used to use a bone flesher to clean the skin.
Akwat ts'a' jidii shrii varahnyaa ree izhik gwanaa gwanlįį.	At that time they had a knife made like this.
Deeddhoo gwich'in t'agahnyaa.	They called this skin scraper a *deeddhoo*.
Khagayahtrak ts'a' it'ee ree ch'anghwah tsal oo'ok giyahtan ts'a' ree jyaa digiyah'in.	They cut the hair off the skin, then put it outside to freeze, then they used the iron scraper on it.

Aii t'ee ch'ookwat zhee googaa tr'ookwat ch'adhah.	Later we even bought skins at the store.
Ch'ookwat zhee goodlit gwats'an.	Since the store was established.
Aaa! shitseii gwintł'oo ch'adhaa ich'idiidhan aii t'arahnyaa.	Ah! grandchild, it was very easy to work on a skin with those tools.
Dazhoo thal dazhoo ik haa t'agąąhchy'aa roo niivyaa chan.	Fur pants and fur parkas were all they used, and also skin tents.
Gwintł'oo niivyaa nitsii t'agahnyaa.	They mean a really big skin tent.
Aii tthak dazhoo nilįį tthak giyahkhii ree.	All of that was fur, and they tanned it all.
Łi'haa zhehk'aa gwintsii roo.	The household was very big.
Geetak hee jyaa dagwąhtsii lęįį nąįį googaa nihk'ehdak googaa tr'igwich'įį t'oonchy'aa roo.	Sometimes it was so big that several families lived in it, one here, another there.
Zhyaa łyaa gwintsal t'igwinyaa gwiindhan dǫhłįį.	I'll bet you think it was really small.
Zhyaa ree zhehk'aa gwachoo ree zhyaa changoo'ee.	But actually it was big enough for a family, with an entrance to the outside.
Akoo geetak hee vits'ii tr'igwich'įį kwaa oodit k'iinii jyaa dinchy'aa	And then sometimes there was another house opposite, and sometimes not.
dazhoo kak jii kwaii zhyaa t'agąąhchy'aa ooduk ohts'ąįį.	The fur side they put on the outside of the tent.
Dachan tik jyaa digilik giik'at zhaatak ts'a' aii vitih ree yeedee k'iidak ree khagwiin'ee k'iidak ree łat haa ree jyaa dii'in.	They put three sticks and over them they put snow and up at its peak there was an opening through which the smoke went.
Oondaa vatł'an nihts'įį dachan diin'ee vit'įį gwa'an ch'iilkit jeiinchy'aa.	Out in the middle two logs lay side by side, with a fireplace between them, and stakes pounded behind them this way.
Aiits'a' jii dachan ts'ii vii nitsii aii gwintsal ehdee jyaa doonchy'aa ts'a' ree dzaa gwatł'an ree gwaak'a'.	And then in between those big logs there was a little space and here in the middle they built the fire.

Akwat shitseii
izhik hee t'ee
oodak
dich'intł'ii nąįį
aii nąįį chan
tł'eevi' gahtsii roo.

Tł'eevi' gahtsii
aii
aaa! shitseii gwintł'oo
tł'eevi' gahtsii
vakwai' khehłee ach'ahochaa ts'a' k'iizhak neets'aii khaiinji' adach'aadhat aii oo'ęę neegaazhik.

Giitsin tthak khagwilik tł'ęę
gał tsal haa deedoogiyiitsak tł'ęę oondaa łuu
jyaa digilik
zhak a'ee ts'a' jyaa digiyilik.

Aiits'a' giik'at neełuutak ts'a' giikak neegwaahtłak.

Niinghuk kwaa kheet'eegivaatthak ts'a'
łuu ghat nizįį giyahtsik tł'ęę traa
kak deegiyahchik ts'a' giidhaa giyeełeehahchaa.

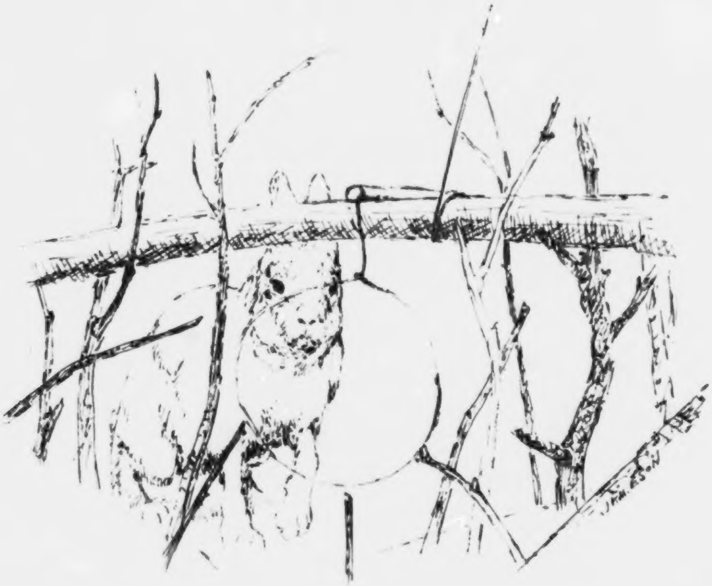
Well, grandchild,
in those days
people who snared rabbits,
they
caught them by the foot.

They caught them by the foot,
and
ah! grandchild, they just
hung there by one foot up in the air, and they really suffered a lot when people
used that kind of snare.

After they cleaned the guts out,
they trussed it up with sticks, and then
put it under the ashes,
lying on its back.

And then they covered it with dirt and started a fire on top of it.

After a little while they took it out and
after they dusted off the ashes,
they threw it on a log and peeled off the skin.



Akwat zhyaa
geh dhivir gwich'in t'oo
ak'ii hee zhyaa ree neethaagahtłii.

Aaa! shitseii gwintł'oo aakin ch'igwiidlii dinjii gwiindaii jaghaii.

Aiits'a' t'ee gwiteegiyahtsit.

Akwat ts'a'
kharil'aii ts'a' gwilii tr'adal kwaa ts'a'
vadzaih gwanlįį dąį' chan viki' neets'aii yeendaa gwaak'a' gwinyaa hee ree neets'aii.

Jołgahtsit
aii
k'eiich'ii yeendaandaa hee tanch'igįįł'ee
łihts'eeradąąhdaa.

Aaa! zhyaa ree vikeedhich'ii zu' dhaa zhyaa ree nji' neegaadal roo.

And then
the rabbit was as white as if it were boiled,
when they tore the skin off.

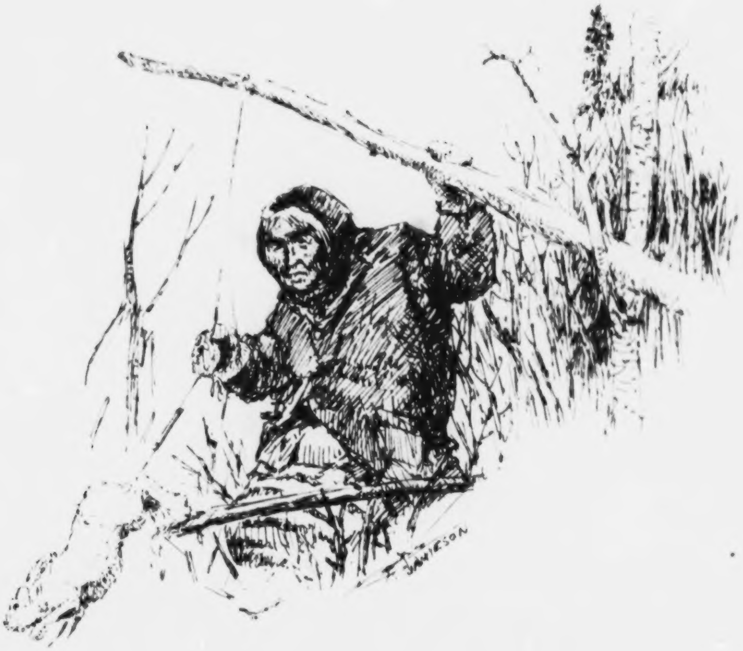
Ah! grandchild, how interesting it is, the way people used to live, isn't it?

And then they gave part of it to everyone.

And then
sometimes we spit-roasted meat,
when there was a lot of caribou, turning each side now and again to the fire.

They made a roasting stick
and
thrust it through the meat
and roasted it before the fire.

Ah! when it was cooked, they took it off and ate it, nice and warm.



14 Old-time household furnishings and the coming of cloth; muskrat hunting and the coming of guns

Muskrats were always a minor source of food for the Gwich'in people, but they began to hunt them on a large scale when their fur became valuable. Belle describes how set nets and dipnets were used to take muskrats. In more recent times, people began to use .22s to hunt muskrats from boats. The "nose gun" Belle refers to has not been identified; it may be a translation of the English "muzzle-loader."

Ąąhą'
vadzaih dhaa khaii
giizhiłchųų aii zhyaa vaghai' khajii ts'a' ditr'uu
ditsuu zhyaa vakak haa'ee veelin zhyaa tthak
łihts'eehotthak
aii zhit giłchųų t'oonchy'aa.
Jyaa gwizhrii goo'ąįį.
Veegogwantrii nąįį geh dhaa ahotł'ii
aii chan khajii dąį' ree
khehłaa t'inchy'aa kwaa t'inchy'aa.

Aii k'it t'inch'ii tsal haa zhrii aii ree kak digilzhii.
Vit'ee chyaa ts'a' oozhak iłtsuu ah kak
jyaa gwizhrii.

Tsuu chan googaa kwaa.
Dagogwach'aa tłik
aii digikįį giłtsuu gwizhrii.
Jeiinchy'aa
vakwai' vitsįį. . .
jyaa dinchy'aa ts'a' giłchųų.
Shandaa t'arah'in aii gwach'aa googaa kwaii haa tthak nał'yą' eegįįhkhii t'iihnyaa.

Aaa!
łyaa lagwadoo
kwaa t'igwinyaa.

Yes,
in the winter they slept
on caribou skins so worn the hair was falling off them,
there was just a little hair on them around the edges,
and in patches,
and that was what they slept in.
That's the way it was.
People who had hard times wove rabbit skins together;
when those lose their hair,
they are no good at all.
They would cover themselves with things like those.
On the floor they spread skins on a mat of spruce boughs,
that's all they had.
There wasn't even a pillow.
They bundled up their old clothes
and used that for a pillow.
Just like that,
in their skin pants with feet attached,
was the way they slept.
I'm talking about things that happened during my lifetime, I've seen these clothes and things.

Ah!
there was not any
cloth then.

Akwat it'ee ihtsii gwiizhik at'oohju' hee ree geetak ree
Inglis ts'an ik
naraatsuu gwaał'in.

Ch'eetak nąįį zhrii.

Geetak chan k'ooneiit'aii ki'
narooljik nał'in jyaa
gwizhrįį.

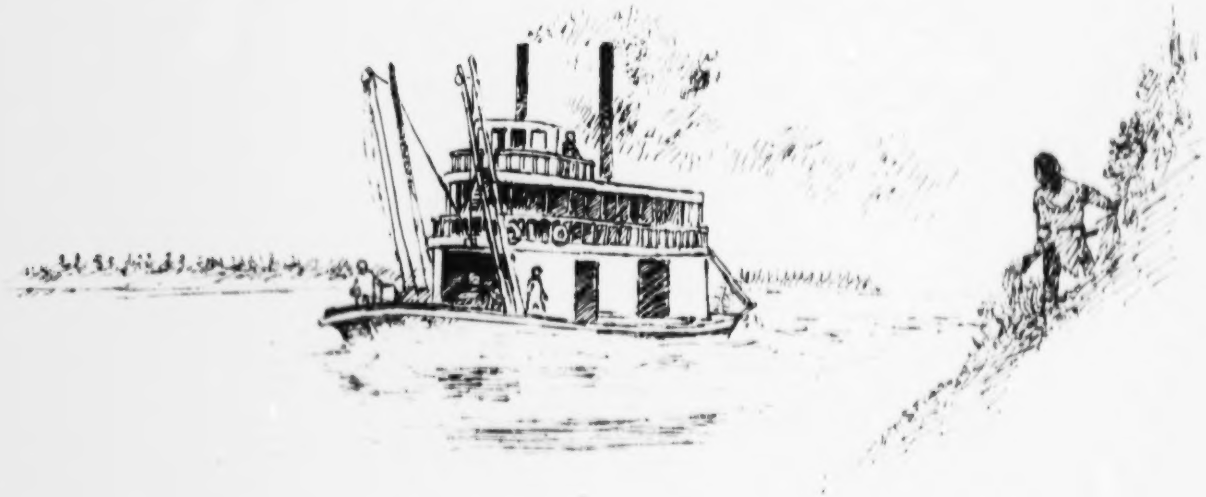
Niinghit kwaa gwanaa gwats'an
yeeduk ts'ąįį vaanoodlit
nąįį zhik gwa'an Dawson,
Circle,
yeedit
Neets'it Gwich'in nahkak gwats'an tik ts'a' ch'aragwąh'ąįį, gwats'an steamboat goodlit
ts'a' at'oohju' hee jeiinch'ii kwat goodlit t'oonchy'aa.

After I grew up, I sometimes saw
people wearing
clothes they got from the Canadians.

Only some people.

Sometimes I saw women
wearing kerchiefs on their heads,
that's all.

Not very long ago
white people over on that side,
around Dawson,
and in Circle
down in
Neets'it Gwich'in territory struck gold, and from then on the steamboat started,
and that's when trade goods started to come in.



Izhik gwanaa googaa
zheegwadhah tr'iilee iltsąįį gwanlįį kwaa.

Ik tr'iilee iltsąįį gwanlįį kwaa
zhyaa jyaa t'inch'ii ky'oot'aii
akwat ts'a'
zheegwadhaa tr'ahahtsyaa
daagąįį
aii ch'aghwah
aii chan goodlit
k'iighai' dinjii
jyaa shandaa
digwiizhik t'oonchy'aa.

Aaa! shitseii, neeshreegwąąhchy'a'
t'oonchy'aa
neeshreegwąąhchy'a' t'oonchy'aa.

Mahsį' gwinyaa ts'ąįį gwinzįį t'oonchy'aa.

Duuyee dachan zhee chan ree gaagwiindaii
kwaa nats'aa.

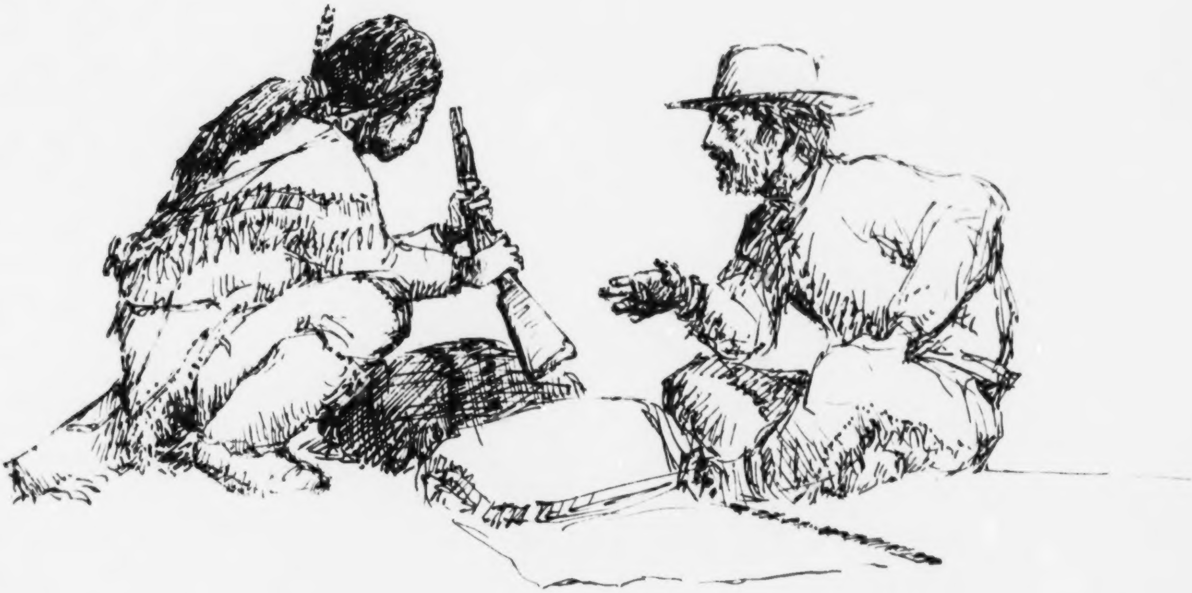
Even at that time
there were no ready-made tents.

There were no ready-made dresses,
only lengths of material
and then
material for tents,
white,
in a bolt;
that also first came
because of those men;
during my lifetime
it happened.

Ah! grandchild, we were poor,
that's so,
we were really poor.

So we should say thank you now.

We didn't even know about log cabins.



Aii t'agwaihnyaa
laraa kwaii aragwah'ąįį k'iighai' vaanoodlit nąįį goodlit t'oonchy'aa.

Aii gwik'iighai' t'ee zhyaa jyaa digwii'in chan gik'iranjik t'oonchy'aa.

Łi'haa
hee gwanaa
aii vijuu gwanaa hee
chan dzan
khyąą haa dzan keerii'in gik'igwanjik t'oonchy'aa roo.

Akǫǫ aii jyahts'a' digwii'in k'iighai'
nan kak tthak chan zhyaa ree dzan keerii'in nagwaanąįį t'oonchy'aa.

Jidii ghoo tsal diky'aatł'įį haa
zhyaa van vęę hee jyaa digii'in.

Aii
van
dzan tr'ihiltąįį hee goghoh gwanlįį nahąą.

Aii ihtreech'aratthak vats'a' ahtr'aii k'it t'injik
it'ee dzan tr'ihiltąįį.

Aaa!
shitseii jyaa darah'in
gohch'it dee tan tr'iigok.

Oodok ts'iivii
kharikyaa
jyaa dąhjyaa tr'ahtsii ts'a' aii
jidii k'aii ch'iłsaii haa oondak
vatąįį neechiridiitthak.

Yi'eendaa chan it'ee łyaa tr'ihiltąįį vik'igwaandak.

Aiits'a' t'ee
nihts'ąą
dachan jyaa darah'in
ts'a' k'iinaa tr'ihiltąįį gwizhrii ts'a'
dzan ah chan.

Aii deetły'ah
jyaa dąhtsii

But as I said,
they struck gold, and so the white people came.

That was how we learned about those things.

Really
not long ago
just recently,
we also learned
about trapping for muskrats.

So we started to do that,
everybody in the country started to trap for muskrats.

There was a round thing tied to a pole,
and they went around the lakeshore with that.

In that
lake
were muskrat tunnels—you know by the bubbles.

They cast the pole at them, and the wind carried it
to where the tunnel was.

Ah!
grandchild, that's what we did;
finally we poked through the ice.

In the woods we cut
spruce poles,
we made them this long and
there was a bend at one end, with which
we poked down into the channel.

Then we knew for sure where it came out.

Then
we put the poles
close together on each side,
and where it came out,
we also used the muskrat dipnet.

That dipnet
was about so big,

aiits'a' aii ahotł'ii jyaa dąhjyaa
dzaa hee vadąįį.

Akwat ts'a'
k'iinaa tr'ihiltąįį oondee
k'aii gwiniriitthak
akwat ts'a'
dzaa ree dzan aa chiheechyaa.

Dzaa chan k'aii gwiniriitthak akwat ts'a' t'ee dzan aa chirichik.

Zhik k'aii it'ee ree dzaa tr'ahaghal
k'aii ree jyaa dii'in.

Akwat ts'a'
it'ee dzan aa zhihak ts'a'
yeenjit chan jyaa dii'in jyaa dirilik
deiinchy'aa
vizhit ree dzan dhidii.

Jyaa darah'in ts'a' dzan lęįį kharilii.

Jyahts'a' gwizhrįį giyunkee'in t'inchy'aa.

Akwat ts'a'
shin hee duuyee.

Jidii haa t'igiihah'yaa gǫǫ aii chan k'i' haa
giyaahkhok gwizhrįį
jyaa dinchy'aa t'inchy'aa.

Dats'an googaa tthak k'i' haa zhrii.

Twenty-two chan kwaa dink'ee kwaa t'oonchy'aa nats'aa.

Ch'antsįh dink'ee giyahnyaa
ree shandaa goodlit.

Forty-four chan
aii haa neekwąįį ree shandaa goodlit t'oonchy'aa.

Gwanlįį gwats'an ihłįį.

Akwat ts'a' it'ee dink'ee goodlit.

woven like a fishnet, about so long,
and it went into the channel.

Then
at the outlet of the channel
they poked two sticks
and then
the muskrat net was tied to them.

They poked two willow sticks down there and put the net in the water between them.

The willow stick shook a little here,
since it was made of flexible willow.

Then
when the rat went into it
we would pull it out,
and there it was
with the muskrat sitting in it.

We took a lot of muskrat out that way.

This was the only way we hunted them.

But
not in the summertime.

How else could they hunt them—sometimes
they killed them with arrows,
but that's all.

Even ducks were only killed with arrows.

There were no twenty-twos or rifles then.

What they called a nose gun,
that first came during my lifetime.

And the forty-four,
those two first came during my lifetime.

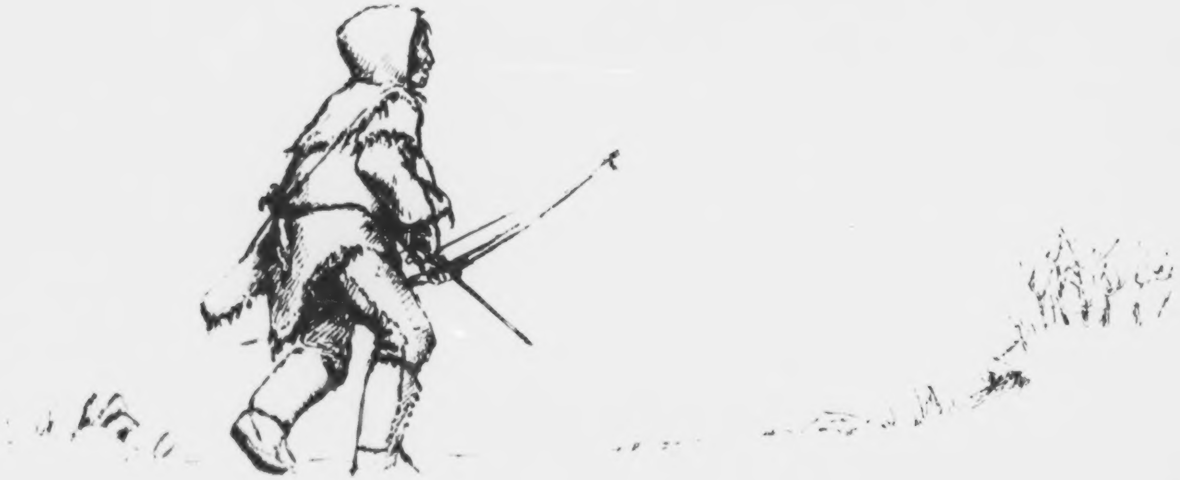
I was alive at that time.

So then there began to be guns.

15 Hunting in the old days

The first kind of arrows Belle mentions are the bone-tipped arrows used for birds and small game; the arrows used for moose were those with broad heads of iron or stone. Belle apparently knew the iron arrowheads, for she refers to people "pounding and flattening" them; however, this might also describe chipping stone. The caribou snares Belle mentions were set in openings in specially constructed barriers or "fences" into which the caribou were often driven during organized hunts. Belle also mentions that before the coming of traders, only animals useful as meat were hunted, not fur-bearers such as mink, marten, fox, and wolverine.

Ijii izhik it'ee dachan tał googaa gwanlįį t'oonchy'aa.	At that time there were stick arrows, even.
Tth'an k'i' tth'an khanłeegąąhkhoo.	They made a sharp bone arrowhead.
Zhik dinjik vanchoh dohts'aii vanchoh jidii ts'ik vandha'ee nahąą aii t'ee googaa tthaa nilįį t'inchy'aa.	In the foreleg of a moose, you see, there is a little narrow piece of bone, and they used that for an awl.
Tthaa nilįį ts'a' jidii tał aii jeiinchy'aa geetak hee tth'an ts'ik jyaa dąhjyaa vikiitsii jyaa darąhthan.	That is the awl and a kind of arrow, that too was sometimes made of that thin bone, about this long, people put it at the end of the arrow.
K'i' gahtsii aii chan tth'an ts'ik ch'ihłak geetak neekwąįį.	They made arrows with that thin bone, one piece or sometimes two.
Akwat aii haa nintsal ti'raahk'ee k'it t'igii'in.	And they used these to shoot small game.
Shin khaii haa nihk'it.	In both summer and winter.
Akwat dinjik eenjit chan thok k'i' gii'įį t'iginchy'aa aii haa dinjik tsik zhrii ree tr'oaahk'ee izhik ree gogogwaa'i' ts'a' ree ts'a' khan dinjik gaahkhwąįį.	They had a different kind of arrow for moose, as it was, and with that they shot the moose in the ribs and that way they killed them quickly.



Aii t'ee chan
dinjik aii
chan yeendaa k'i'eenin dachan nin'ee
izhik chan oondaa neeriidal gwinyaa
  t'oonchy'aa.
Izhik ts'iivii
ts'ik oonii
neeraazhik gwinyaa t'oonchy'aa.
Aii giyatthat ts'a' lęįį giyahtsik.

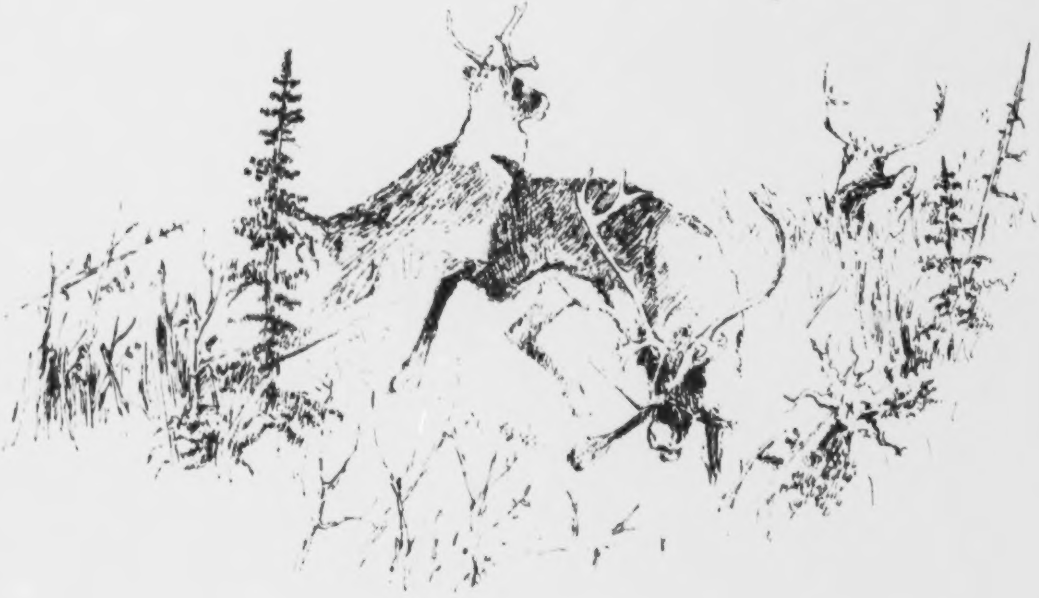
Akwat ts'a' aii
k'i' tsįį tł'eegaadhak aii gwintsal nihky'aa
  giich'ahąąhtthak ts'a' nichyaagiyahtsik.

Aii
k'i' tsįį aii t'ee dinjik eenjit.
Aii haa chan dinjik ti'raahk'ee k'it
  t'igii'in goorahnyaa.
Zhik dinjik
deeghan zhrįį goaahk'ee, goahjii dohłįį
  aii ts'a'
khan dinjik gaghan jyaa digii'in.

In those days,
for moose
we would go over there,
way over where that bunch of trees are.
That was where we got
narrow
spruce poles.
They chopped them and made a lot.

Well now,
they pounded and flattened the arrowhead
  and made it wide at the end.

That
arrowhead was for moose.
They say they used to shoot moose
  with those.
They shot the moose
only in the shoulder, they hit it with an
  arrow, I guess, and
in that way they killed it quickly.



Vadzaih gaa chan ree geetak chan vyah aii łyaa t'agwąąhchy'aa gwinyaa.	But for caribou people made skin snares, and that is mostly what they used.
Vyah dinjik ch'adhah aii vyah tr'ahtsii aii dich'igintł'įį ts'a' khik zhyaa dinjik teech'agaląį'.	The snare was made of moosehide which they braided together and they always snared moose too.
Vadzaih gwanlįį dąį' chan izhik chan giyaa lęįį dahkhwąįį t'arahnyaa jyaa dii'in ts'a' gohch'it chan vyah eenjit law goodlit ts'a' zhyaa ree akharoonyaa roo.	When there were lots of caribou they killed many by doing this, but later they made a law against snares so we stopped doing it.
Juk gwandaa googaa ch'eetak nąįį jyaa dii'in k'it t'igwinyaa gaa ree.	Even now I hear some people do that, though.
Akwat łi'haa juk nats'aa tr'agwandaii gwik'it t'ichy'aa dinjii t'eedaa'in haa jyaa t'inchy'aa.	Right now today the way we make our living is just the way we are.

Shitseii
duuyee chihdzuu,
tsuk, neegǫǫ kwaii haa duuyee.

Tr'ookwat kwaa akwat juk ree tr'ookwat
geh'an jyaa digii'in.

Nahtryaa chan googaa duuyee.

Nin keegii'in kwaa t'iginchy'aa
tr'ihee'aa zhrih.

Akwat juk ree
ch'ookwat niljį geh'an ree giyankee'in
akwat izhik gwanaa
nats'aa geenjit giyankeehee'yaa gǫǫ.

Tr'ookwat gwanljį kwaa akwat zhyaa ree
ndaa geedaa roo.

Grandchild,
we didn't hunt mink,
marten, or fox.

There was no trader, but now they buy
them, so they hunt them.

They didn't even hunt wolverine.

They didn't hunt small game,
only things to eat.

But nowadays
there is a store, so now they hunt them,
but in those days
what reason was there to hunt them?

There was nothing to buy, so they
just lived the way they were.

Alice Moses and Belle Herbert.

16 Marriage then and now

When Belle speaks of "getting married" she means the Christian religious ceremony. As an example of traditional polygamy, which was sometimes practiced by wealthy men in the old days, she talks about the famous Shahnyaati', a powerful chief of the middle to late 19th century, who is still the subject of many stories told in Gwich'in country. Some stories say that Shahnyaati' and Ch'eeghwałti' were rivals; others claim Shahnyaati' had as many as twelve wives.

Duuyee married gwaatsii roo.	Nobody got married!
Łyaa ree niłooheendal nąįį zhyaa ree nihghaii niijyaa.	Really, people who wanted to get married would just live together.
Juu married goohahtsyaa gǫǫ.	Who could marry them, anyway?
Ginkhii chan kwaa ts'a' shandaa gaa gwee'an ginkhii goodlit t'oonchy'aa yi'eenji' gwizhrii hee ginkhii t'oonchy'aa.	There was no preacher, for it was during my lifetime that preachers first came here; there was a preacher far upriver, that's all.
Akwat ts'a' shitseii zhyaa ree łąą izhik eeniłarahaazhii kwaa ts'a' gwinzįį nihk'eegąąhtii ts'a' zhyaa dinjii ch'ihłak jyaa dąąhchy'aa eedhidii nał'ya'.	And so, grandchild, no one quit each other, and they took care of each other really well; I saw one man who had several wives.
Zhik chan vitr'injaa, zhik chan vitr'injaa.	Here was one wife, here was another wife.
Zhyaa zheegwadhaa dzaa gwandaa t'ahtsii di'įį aii zhit zhyaa jyaa dąąhchy'aa eedhidii.	His tent was as large inside as my house and all those women stayed with him.
Shahnyaati' gwinyaa gwiintth'ak dohłįį aii t'aihnyaa.	It's Shahnyaati'—you've heard of him, I suppose— that I'm talking about.
Aaa! shitseii googii nąįį gwanlįį googaa ree zheegwadhaa zhit jii gwandaa t'agwąhtsii roo.	Ah! grandchild, he had lots of kids, but that tent was bigger than my house.
Aaa! shitseii aii akwat neekwąįį eedhidii akhai' nich'it nąąhtsit łii.	Ah! grandchild, he had two wives, and then he also married a young girl, it seems.
Tik eedhidii gwiizhik nał'ya'.	I saw him when he had three wives.

Akwat
aiits'a' it'ee łyaa tth'aii
ch'anjaa nąįį nihkheeriilii gwąął'in
aii t'ee shitsii
Loola t'ii'in.

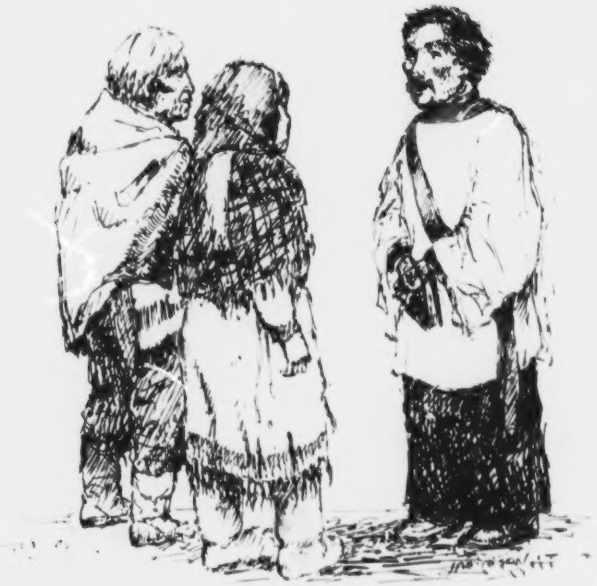
Aii
yeenji' Inglis nahkak hee ginkhii nilįį akhai'
nji' ts'a' neezheegwarahaadlii ts'a' dzaa
  gwinii nihts'ineezhii.
Aii k'iighai' ginkhii
gootee dohłii.
At'oohju' hee
jyaa dagoogah'in gwąął'in.

Akwat ts'a'
lęįį nąįį chųų vats'an gwanlįį kwaa ts'a'
  ninjii ji' gaa vaashandaii kwaa nahąą.
Ginkhii kwaa nats'aa.
Akwat ts'a' it'ee jyaa dagwąhtsii ts'a'.

Later
some time after that
I saw all those old people get married
by my grandfather
William Loola.

He
was a preacher over on the Canadian side,
and when they moved farther up, he came
  down this way.
Because of that there was a preacher
among them, I guess.
That's when
I saw them doing that for them.

At that time
many people died without having been
  baptized, I think, but I don't know.
There was no minister, you know.
That's all I'm going to say for now.



17 Belle's marriage

Belle's mother arranged her marriage before Belle reached puberty, so that her husband had to wait during a sort of engagement period before Belle actually came to live with him. This was a common practice in the old days. Belle dates this time by the deaths of Ch'eeghwalti' and Ch'aadzahti' (probably in the early 1890s, but not yet positively dated). She describes what was done when she reached puberty: she was secluded, not in a separate hut as was the practice in some parts of Athabaskan country, but behind a kind of screen in the family's house, the usual custom among the Gwich'in people. During this time she would also have had to observe a number of taboos, especially against eating certain foods, and probably used a drinking tube (illustrated in the drawing) to drink water. She spent her time sewing under the instruction of older women, whom she calls her older sisters. Belle also had the opportunity at this time to study singing, reading, and knitting with a woman missionary who visited briefly. Belle mentions that because her mother was a poor widow, she could not make a potlatch feast to celebrate her daughter's marriage. The marriage rites of Joe and Belle were performed by the famous Archdeacon McDonald, who traveled in both Alaska and Canada working for the Anglican or Episcopal church.

Akwat shįį aii dinjii shats'an nilįį dąį' shįį łąą tth'aii hee t'ee shadaa shats'an nilįį kwaa gwiizhik t'ee ni'ęę dinjii sheenjit oonjik t'oonchy'aa.	When I was going to get married, I was still very young; my mother got a man for me even before I had my first period.
Aaa! nitsii t'ee yeenji' gwich'in t'inchy'aa nahąą.	Ah! your grandfather was from upriver, you see.
Ch'ihłok nał'ya' aii gwats'an it'ee ni'ęę yuunjik.	I had only seen him once and after that my mother got him.
Kwat ts'a' tth'aii hee łąą shadaa shats'an nilįį kwaa gwiizhik t'igwii'in roo.	When that was happening, I hadn't even had my first period yet.
Aiits'a' yeenji' doondee ts'eehoozhii gwa'an hee ree kogwił'aii ts'a' it'ee shadaa shats'an dhidlit tł'ee hee gohju' hee veesharąhchii t'inchy'aa.	So he went back upriver with his older brother and stayed there until I became a woman, and after that he came and lived here.

Aii
aaa! shin hee zhyaa
aii
oonjit
shee'ii
John Shuman gwinyaa
aii yee'at gwich'įį gwich'in oonjit
Old Rampart nijin hee shrit li'.

Izhik gwats'an łąįį ts'ii yeek'idik łii
gwikįį hee ch'ihłok gwizhrii nał'ya'
nitsii.

Akwat gwats'at it'ee oodit
oodi' shee'ii haa nihee
it'ee neekwąįį.

Googaa nee'ii
ants'a' tseeniichii zhyaa ree vanh dąį' hee
shachaa haa traa keehii'oo.

Akwat łąą khehłan
t'ihchy'aa kwaa.

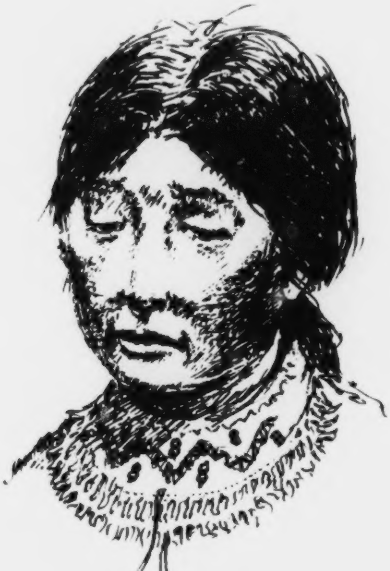
Then,
ah! in the summertime
that one
up there,
my mother's brother
they call John Shuman
lived up there, I think,
somewhere around Old Rampart maybe.

From there he broke trail for his dogteam,
and that was the only time I had seen
your grandfather.

From there
he went down with my uncle,
that's twice.

But your uncle
was living out there somewhere and in the
morning my younger brother and I were
going for firewood.

I never could sit
in one place.



Aii gwiizhik t'ee neegihii'oo łii ts'a' ni'ee aii yandrąįį inzhii łii.
Aiits'a' deeyuaanjik łii ts'a' shitsii nąįį gogwandaii shee'ii nąįį haa.

It'ee ehjyaa zhyaa ree ginjiitrak haa zhyaa niriinjil.

Akwat
it'ee ree aaha' nyaa dǫhłii.
It'ee neegohoo'oo
łii ts'a' ree
traa oo'ee neediilil łąįį dąąhchy'aa łii li'.

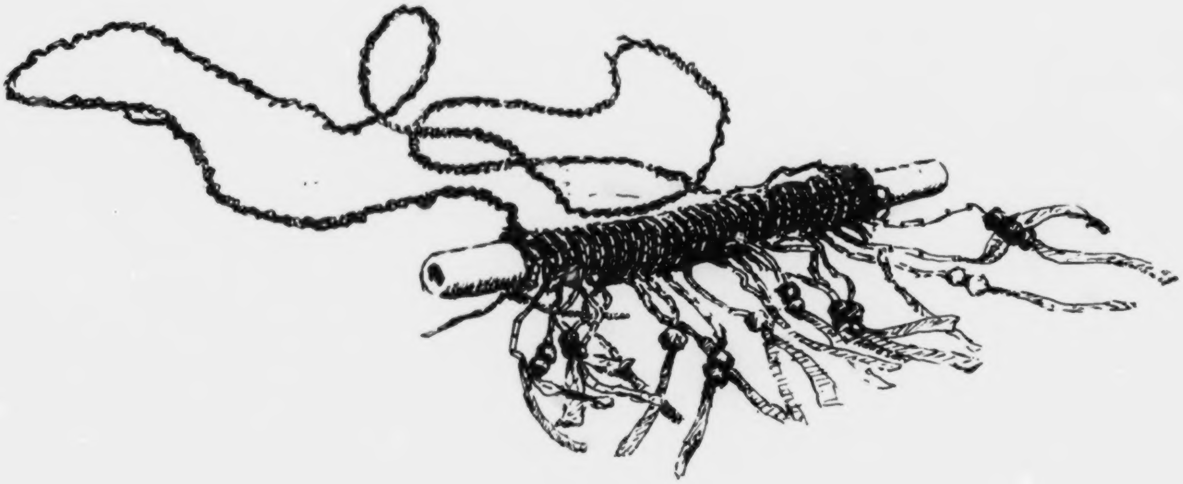
Aaa! diizhit gwiłts'ik
aiits'a' nihdeeshuu diniishadhat ree
ni'ęę ree t'inyaa.
"Oodit nitii Henry
goozhee gwats'a' hinhaii," jyaa ree shahnyaa
Gwiizhik shoondee
Robert chan
izhik t'ee tr'injaa t'iilnaii.
Izhik zhat gwich'įį.

As they were leaving, my mother just stood right in front of him.
She chose him for me, it seems, even though my grandfather and my uncle were living at the time.

They got together and made speeches outside.

So
I guess he said yes.
Then they left,
it seems, and
we came back pulling a load of firewood—
I forget how many dogs we had.

Ah! we were very hungry
so I went inside real quickly and
my mother spoke.
"Go down to your uncle Henry's house,"
she told me.
At that time my older brother
Robert also
was married.
They were living there too.



Aiits'a' ree aii shitii t'ee shaa gwahaandak tr'igwiłtsąįį łii roo.	And so my father's brother was supposed to tell me about it!
Aaa! shitseii łąą gwadraii ninjich'ihtthat kwaa zhyaa.	Ah! grandchild, I had never even thought about it.
Akwat ts'a' t'ee ree gwik'eegwałthat.	So at that I obeyed.
Oodi' hoiizhii ts'a' ree nihdeiizhii ree zhyaa ree shitsii va'at tr'ikhit ree gwinzįį t'ii'in chy'aa ree yeendit ree dhidii.	I went down and went in; my grandfather's wife always used to do well, but she was just sitting across the room.
Gwiizhik shitsii zhyaa ree yaaghat vakaa'aa kak shih shee nizįį ahtsii.	Meanwhile, my grandfather just was putting food on the table for me.
Akwat ts'a' ree ch'ihi'aa gwiłtsąįį ts'a' ree ch'ih'aa.	So then he gave me food to eat and I ate.
It'ee łąą giinjik tł'ee chan hee sheeghaii nineezhii.	After I had finished, he came to my side.
"Dinjii neenjit tr'oonjik t'oonchy'aa dǫhłii t'oon'ya' shro'," jyaa zhyaa shahnyaa.	"We have got a man for you; don't think anything about it," was all he said to me.
Aaa! łąą diinach'adarąąhkhaa k'it t'ishizhik.	Ah! it was just like somebody hit me across the face.
Aaa! shitseii akwat aii gwikįį nał'ya' vaihnyaa izhik t'ee yeedihjyaa ts'ąįį gooti' gavaa teehozhii t'inchy'aa.	Ah! grandchild, remember I said I had seen him before, when their father had gone up with him.
Aiits'a' yeenji' neegohoojil akhai' shaghoii choo chan Nildhat Ti' vachaa John Digin varahnyaa.	And so they started upriver then, my big brother-in-law and Nildhat Ti''s younger brother, who was called John Digin.
Mary Gwih'aa gwinyaa gwiintth'ak aii t'ee eedhidii.	You've heard of Mary Gwih'aa— he was married to her.
Aii t'ee Mary Gwih'aa vijuu niindhat aii yigii kwaii teegwiljik.	And then Mary Gwih'aa's younger sister died and they took in her children.

Aiits'a' aii tr'injaa nich'it dinky'ahthat aii shaghoii nitł'ee gąhchii łii.	And so that woman raised the young girl, and they gave her to my brother-in-law, it seems.
Akwat izhik zhat t'ee k'inidik doondee haa t'inchy'aa.	Then he went back up and arrived there and stayed with his older brother.
Akwat ts'a' chan tr'iinin goodlit shidyaahch'į' igiyułshrii łii.	There someone had a baby and named him after my old man.
Aii chan vihdineeranchįį łii. Gohch'it it'ee ch'adąį' hee sheenjit ch'aroąąhkat tł'ee hee t'igwii'in.	But it suffocated. Finally this was going on after they had already asked him for me.
Aii zhik oonii teegaajil dąį' gooti' gavaa. Aiits'a' t'ee ni'ęę haa ni'ęę haa ants'a' gihiljii łii. Izhik t'ee ni'ęę haa dhidii dǫhłii. Ginkhii t'inchy'aa akwat t'ee izhik t'ee shąąh'in dǫhłii.	So when they came down their father was with them. And then with my mother— they were gone with my mother. He was visiting there with my mother, I guess. Now he was a preacher; I think he saw me then.
Shitseii khai' gwanlįį ji' "Nik'ee shuu shigii khaiints'a' eenjit oohodooshandal," jyaa ree shahnyaa łii.	Grandchild, if it didn't happen quickly— "Maybe I should take her for my youngest son," he said about me.
It'ee ree shaaghan ree chigwizhrii yee'an ch'ihłee ree zhyaa ree dąhthee gahąąh'ya' gwats'a' jyaa dinchy'aa dǫhłii.	Oh, that old lady was waiting until she saw somebody, I guess.
Aaa! shitseii akwat zhyaa ree tth'aii hee ch'ik'it tałdaii kwaa gwiizhik zhyaa ree.	Ah! grandchild, just then and still I didn't even know what was going on.
Akwat ts'at chan ree nagwarol'in ts'a' nih'an kwaiik'it hee chan ree.	We were each waiting in different villages.
Akwat ts'a' yeedit Circle izhik chan deegwits'iichy'aa li'. Izhik chan ree t'inchy'aa dǫhłii niti' izhik chan hee Mardow vaa neehidik tth'aii hee.	And over there in Circle, I wonder what he was doing there. At that time I believe your father was still going around with Mardow.
Aii Mardow eenjit łąįį ts'įį k'idik ts'a' yeedit chan ree	He was breaking trail for Mardow's dogs and down there

naga'oo łii
shreenyaa
gwiindhaa gwiizhik
ookit
kih kak.

Akwat yeedit
yi'eendaa hee gwit'ee googaa kih kak gwanlįį t'oonchy'aa
izhik kih kak hee zheegwadhaa nihts'ii gwinin'ee.

Aii
ni'ęę vits'ii chan tr'igwich'įį.

Akwat łąą
sheejii
aii chan veeraadii gaa yęhdak gwich'įį.

Aiits'a'
gwiizhik yeedee tł'eedik gwa'an jyaa doonchy'aa goodlii sheejìi shee'ii nąįį haa t'iginchy'aa.

Kwat ts'a'
drin hee gwats'a' khagaajil dǫhłii.
Zhyaa ree vik'iitł'it zhyaa
lidii shih tsal haa tr'iilee ałthan.

Aiits'a' kwank'it dhiidii
nihdeerahaa'oo doonchy'aa Mardow ree.
Aii gwits'ii chan ree naadii.

Aaa!
yeenii
Circle ts'ąįį naga'oo gwiihtth'ak
chy'aa ree.
Zhyaa ree tr'iits'aa hihtrit
ni'įį vik'iitł'it tr'iilee gwaałthan aii zhyaa
yeendaa k'ik dohshroo nii'at kak zhyaa givee nitł'eech'aałjil.
Aii Mardow k'iindaa shih ts'a'
naadii khehłee
ts'a' "Nikhwee shih ts'a' ginkhii," chan ree shahnyaa.
Shih ts'a' girinkhii
gaashandaii kwaa gwiizhik ree
t'ashahnyaa.

Zhyaa ree nał'in chan ree ihdlaa kwaa zhyaa ree
łyaa ree

the two of them were going
in early spring
while it was getting warm
down there
on a sandbar.

Down there then
over there was a big sandbar
and there on the sandbar were two tents with their openings opposite each other.

She,
my mother, had a tent and someone was staying opposite her.

Now
my older sister
was married, but they were living with her too.

And
up on the bank above there were houses just like this, and my uncle and my other sister were living there.

Then
during the day they went up there, I guess.
I was staying there by myself
and I had tea and a little food ready for them.

So I was sitting there alone
and somebody came in, and it was Mardow.
He sat down on the other side.

Ah!
over there
toward Circle I heard they were going
formerly.
I didn't even know what to do,
I had everything ready in my mother's absence,
so I set a dishtowel on the ground and set out a plate for them on it.

Mardow sat down to eat,
both of them did,
and he said, "Say grace for us" to me.
I didn't even know how to say grace over food
when
he said that to me.
I just looked at him and didn't even smile,
really

jyahts'a'
geenjit oozhii tr'inlii gwik'it ree t'ihchy'aa.

Akwat ts'a'
it'ee ree
gwinzįį ree neech'igin'al lidii chan gwinzįį geeni'.

It'ee ree gigiinjik k'it t'igiizhik
k'ik chan ree tineegoołtrat roo.
K'ik tineegoołtrat ts'a' gwinzįį geeneiitrat.
Łąą inli' kwaa ts'a' ree shoondee cheehoozhii
Mardow.

Adant'ee chan ree
aaa!
iinch'it ts'a' chan ni'ęę vik'iitł'it
chan lidii eeniitrat.
It'ee ni'ęę
adan chan k'eenidik.

Aiitł'ee chan hee googaa
khaii neegwiidhat.
Khaii neegwiidhat ts'a'
izhik khaii it'ee łyaa zhyaa
yeenjit
Circle it'ee łyaa zhee goo'ąįį.

Akwat ts'a'
dąįį neegwiidhat it'ee Ch'eeghwałti' niindhat.
Yee'at Charley Loola
nąįį haa yeendaa
Mary digigii haa tthak
Ch'eeghwałti' ts'an ginlįį nąįį t'iginchy'aa.

Akwat ts'a'
izhik shitii niindhat izhik khaii it'ee
Gabriel viti' tr'iiłk'ee gwinyaa gwiintth'ak dǫhłii.
Izhik khaii t'ee
Gabriel viti' tr'iiłk'ee gǫǫ.
Aiits'a' neegwiłgǫ'.

Yeendak gwich'in ginlįį
Ch'aadzahti'
varahnyaa aii t'ee tr'iiłk'ee t'igwinyaa.
Aiits'a' yeedit diikhwan t'ihiichy'aa nagwaanąįį.

I was kind of
shy like that, is how I was.

And then
after that
they ate well and drank tea too.
After they finished
I quickly cleared the dishes away.
I cleared the dishes away and cleaned up.
He didn't waste any time, he just left,
Mardow.

And he himself, too.

Ah!
then right away
I made tea again.
Then my mother
herself returned home.

After that
winter had passed again.
During that winter
was the very time
Circle was established.

And then
in early summer Ch'eeghwałti' died.
That Charley Loola
and his people over there
and Mary [Thompson] and all her kids
are descendants of Ch'eeghwałti'.

So then
that same winter that my uncle died,
somebody shot Gabriel's father, I bet you heard about that.
That winter
somebody shot Gabriel's father.
And then the snow melted again.

They are descended from people from the North.
Ch'aadzahti'
was the one that was killed, so they say.
We were going to stay down there.

Akwat ts'a'
neegwilgǫ' ts'a'
June nan ree
tr'injaa dhiidlit.

Aaa!
it'ee chan shaaghan
shineegootrat gwit'įį gwa'an chan dhiidii.
Sheejii nąįį zhyaa jidii k'eehaałkaa zhyaa sheeneegaadal.

Gwintł'oo k'eech'adoołkąį'.
Akwat zhyaa nilee ashagwagwąh'i' roo.
Jyaa t'ee deenaadąį'
tr'injaa ilik nąįį darah'in izhik t'ee gwitr'it gavantł'ee gwaatth'ak gwinyaa t'oonchy'aa.
Gwik'it t'ishiginlik sheejii nąįį.

Akwat t'ee ree
gwiizhik chan t'ee
school ahtsii tr'injaa zhyaa ree yeenihjyaa
tr'ihchoo zhit
aii one week t'inchy'aa gwich'in.
Ghai' shrii ree school ahtsii zhyaa ree
shant'ee ree.

Akwat zhyaa ree
vaanoodlit ky'aa ch'iihłii t'ee
vaanoodlit ky'aa chan ree zhyaa idęhtły'aa kak ree gįįhshii t'ee.

Akwat
chan stocking tr'itł'uu chan gwik'it t'ishi'in
nagwaanąįį one week googaa.

Akwat chan hee zhyaa ree ginkhii ree teedhizhii yeekit ree
zheegwadhaa gwanąh'ee ree
aii gwiizhik ree nitsii ree teedhakwąįį łii.

Akwat ts'a' ree
zhyaa ree oo'ok vineedziihałtthak gwizhrii ree.
Ni'ęę chan yeenjit shadraii gihikhii kwaa.

Aiits'a' ree
gohch'it ree nihdeiinzhii ts'a' ree shoaahkat.
"Noohihdal gwinyaa nijii yindhan?" shahnyaa.

And then
the snow melted and
in June
I became a woman.

Ah!
then the old woman
made something for me to sit behind.
My older sisters gave me something to sew.

I sewed a lot.
They taught me how to do things with my hands.
In the old days
that's what they did with young women, and that's when they started to do things with their hands.
That's what my sisters did with me.

And then
while this was going on
a woman schoolteacher came down
in a boat
for one week, I think.
She was teacher and
I also was among them.

Then
I was singing in the white man's way,
I even read in the white man's way.

Then
I even learned how to knit stockings
though it was only one week.

And then a minister came down and there
he had his tent set up.
While this was going on your grandpa came down in a canoe.

Then
I only heard about him that's all.
My mother didn't even say anything to me about him either.

Finally
one time he came in and asked me.
"They say I'm going to get married to you; when do you think we'll do it?" he said to me.

"Ni'ęę neeshraahchy'aa sheenjit vak'ąąhtįį gwinzįį vak'ąąhtįį ji' sheenjit gwinzįį," ree jihnyaa.

Akwat t'ee khagiihee kwaa
ji' it'ee ree sheerihiłchįį ree nigwihiltth'at.

Shitseii łyaa ree
gitr'ii'ee khyu' t'ashagahnyaa gohch'it ree gook'eegoołthat roo.
Sheenjit gogwanlįį kwaa ts'a' t'ihchy'aa dǫhłii tr'igwįhjik ts'a'.

Aiits'a'
t'ee
ree gwintsal gwinzįį shik'eehąąhtyaa
ni'ęę gwilęįį
nashąąhchii łii.
Akwat chiitee ihłįį k'eegwiichy'aa gwatsal ni'ęę t'iizhik kwaa roo.

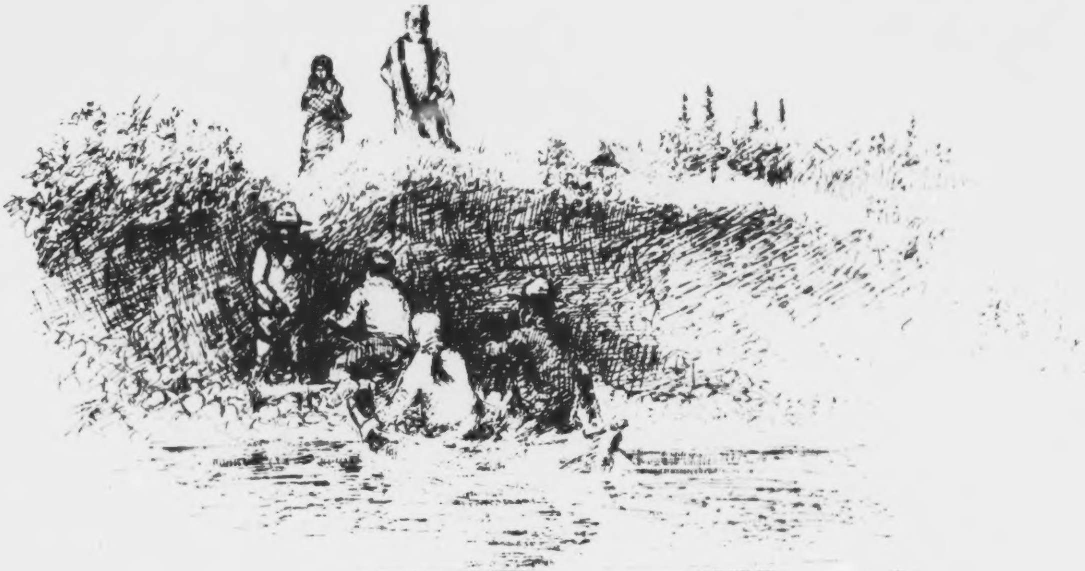
Akwat
shidyąąhch'į' chan kwandeetak neevalaii haatth'ak t'ii'in kwat ree k'eegwiichy'aa gwakwaa.

"My mother is very poor and if somebody takes care of her for me,
if somebody takes good care of her, it will be good for me," I said.
So then I didn't say anything more,
but it was about time for us to get married.

Grandchild, really
I didn't like it, but they kept asking me, so finally I did it.
I was so innocent, I guess, that what they said was like nothing to me.

So
then
it turned out he was going to take good care of me;
my poor mother
put me there.
I was an orphan, so my mother didn't make potlatch for me.

Then
my old man was just going around by himself so he didn't have many things either.



Aii ginkhii
dyąąhch'i' varahnyaa aii t'iizhik yiihthan aii t'ee nihts'an nikhwełtsąįį.
Duuyee dzat ginkhii
gwąąh'in yeedi' teetsii ahaa t'ii'in dǫhłii aii k'iighai'.

Izhik gwanaa t'ee
shandaa ch'anjaa nąįį googaa jyaa darah'in shitii zhat naanąįį ts'a' ree.

Ginkhii Loola zhrii ree ginkhii niłįį roo.
Yeenjuk gwizhrii hee chan ginkhii dǫhłii.

Oodit
di' ts'a' Fish Camp izhik shoondee
kogwigwilzhii aii ni'ęę chan gavaa
aiits'a' izhik gwizhrii hee.

Aiits'a'
gohch'it chan tr'iinin shats'an dhidlit aii nidhikhin tł'ee at'oohju' hee geełeehidhii'oo
izhik it'ee yeendak gwik'irinjil jihnyaa tr'oodąį' geegwaldak.
Izhik it'ee giveełeehidhii'oo.
Jyahts'a' gwizhrii ree.

Aii akwat yeenji' ts'ąįį hidhii'oo ts'a'
gwinįhjyaa chan t'igwii'in ts'a' aii chan tr'oodąį' geegwaldak.
Dzaa nirin'oo ts'a'
tth'aii jyaa dihchy'aa roo.

Gwichyaa Zhee gwihch'ii kwaa ts'a' ndaa ihshyaa.
Vaanoodlit chan nał'in kwaa akwat nats'aa vaanoodlit hiihtth'ak gǫǫ.

Jyaa dihchy'aa oodit Fish Camp garahnyaa
chan duuyee geełeerihijyaa.

Akwat ts'a' vaanoodlit chan duuyee tr'ąąh'in.

Jyaa doonchy'aa ts'a'
aiits'a' łąą
vaanoodlit ginjik doihtth'ak ts'a' t'ihchy'aa kwaa roo.

It was the preacher,
the Old Man [McDonald] they call him, who married us, I think.
There was no minister here
and I think he was going downriver, that's why he did that, I think.

At that time
older people even got married, that's when my uncle was there.

William Loola was the only preacher around there at that time.
There may have been a preacher up that way, I suppose.

Down
at Fish Camp my older brothers
were living and my mother with them
so we went there too.

And
finally I had my child and when he started to walk we left them and went back up that way,
that's the time I told you about a while back.
That's when we left them.
And that's all.

When we two went over to that side and
moved up and down, that's what I told about the other day.

We came here and
I'm still here.

I don't live in Fort Yukon, and that's the way I live.
I don't see much of white people, how could I understand them?

That's the way I was down at Fish Camp, as they call it,
and we never left there.

And we didn't see any white people.

That's the way it was
and really
I don't even understand the white people's language when I hear it.

18 The arrival of white people

Belle had a child during the first years of her marriage, in 1896, and when he was still quite young, a gold strike occurred at Koyukuk (either 1899 or 1907). She describes the coming of the gold-crazed miners and the stores and steamboats that supplied their settlements. The "soldier woman" Belle mentions has not been identified.

Yeedit Koyukuk gwinyaa it'ee gaakhwandaii izhik ch'aragwąh'ąįį izhik it'ee shigii neehidik t'oonchy'aa.	Down there at Koyukuk the very first time they struck gold there, my child was walking then.
Akwat ts'a' vaanoodlit zhyaa Yukon di' zhyaa tły'aa ch'aganąąht'aii.	And the white people strung down the Yukon one after another.
Izhik gwitsįį googaa vaanoodlit gwanlįį kwaa t'agwaihnyaa.	After that there were no white people, however.
It'ee izhik zhat kwat ts'a' yeenjit Dawson Circle haa ch'aragwąh'ąįį ginyaa izhik gwehkii hee vaanoodlit dǫhłii.	From then on when they struck gold at Dawson and Circle, maybe there were white people before then.
Gwee'an aii akwaa jeiinchy'aa googaa kwaa t'iihnyaa.	Not around here, not even one.
Yeedit ts'aii ch'aragwąh'ąįį aii chan k'iidi' tły'aa ch'aranąąht'aii.	When they struck gold down that way they just strung out down that way, that's all.
Geetak hee chan vaa neerahąąhtr'il haa. Geetak hee chan ganiisak vakwaiiitryaa kwaa ts'a' ganiisak dakwai' k'oołchaa haa.	Sometimes with skis. Sometimes just a gunny sack, he didn't have any moccasins, and he tied a gunny sack around his feet to walk with.,
Jidii vaa neerahąątr'il chan ch'eeghwaa kwaa chan ree jeiinchy'aa valaii chan ree zhyaa neehąąhtr'il chan ree tąįį gwinjik di' ahaa ree tr'agwąąh'in.	Or just with skis, he just slid along without even any pack on his back, I saw them sliding down the trail like that.
Akwat ts'a' aiitł'ee gwiizhik it'ee steamboat goodlit roo.	After that the steamboat started to come around.

Aii ree yeenji' nahkak geenjit t'ii'in akwat łąą dzat gwee'an chan store gwakwaa kwat t'ee nats'aa k'eiich'ii kwaii gwiheelyaa gǫǫ.	The steamboat even started going up that way, though there was no store around here then; how could there be any goods around here?
Akwat it'ee ree store gwakwaa akwat ree zhyaa ree steamboat zhrii ree. Akwat ts'at gohch'it ree zhyaa ree ch'ookwat zhee gwiltsąįį.	And then there was no store here, there was only the steamboat. But finally a store was built.
Akwat yeedit Koyukuk ch'aragwąh'ąįį ts'a' izhik ree tł'ee ree oonduk nahkak dinjii łi'haa laraa choo zhyaa di'įį aii ree.	Since they struck gold down at Koyukuk, after that somebody from Outside, a really rich man just did that.
Aii ree dinjii vitsyaa yinlįį chan nivee t'ah'in tr'injaa choo chan gavaa. Captain Ray ree. Aii ree zhat indi'. Izhik it'ee ch'ookwat zhee gwiltsąįį.	That man had someone working for him and there was a big soldier woman with them. His name was Captain Ray. He was there. That's when the store was built.
Izhik yeendok khaiinjii dinjii teech'ehdli' yeenii tr'iindii ch'adąį' jihnyaa ijii izhik aii gwats'at t'ee store goodlit t'oonchy'aa. Yeedit N.C. ree t'igwiizhik gwich'in gaa tth'aii hee chan gohch'it t'ee shin shaaghwąįį k'iindaa tth'aii hee store gwanlįį roo.	That time when people almost starved to death back here, that time I talked about before, the store was established down at Ft. Yukon. The N.C. Company was downriver there, I think, and still is, now I'm really old and that same store is still there.
Akwat ts'a' store ch'ihłak zhrii ree gwanlįį.	There was only one store.
Akwat aii steamboat t'ii'in aii kwaii haa zhyaa ree shih lęįį teeraadlii dǫhłii. Aak'ii łąįį choo haa zhyaa jyaa digwiizhik aii geedan.	And they brought freight with the steamboat, a lot of food, I guess. There were cows and horses, they brought those in.
Akwat ts'a' it'ee ree geełee heedyaa it'ee aak'ii tr'inghan t'ee. Aii łąįį choo aii geełee giihaadlii gwats'an vijuu gwanaa hee chan łąįį choo k'ąąhtii ree gwanlįį aii nik'ee giky'aanjik.	Well, he was going to leave, so they killed all the cows. They took those horses away somewhere, there was a man who took care of them, did you hear about that?

Ąąha' izhik gwats'an t'ee t'iginchy'aa t'inchy'aa. Akwat ts'a' aii aak'ii aii ginghan roo.	Yes, that's when they [horses] arrived. And they killed all those cows.
Akwat ts'a' aii Captain Ray vaihnyaa aii zhik store shih lęįį steamboat k'ilik zhat t'iheechy'aa ts'a' zhyaa teeragoodlii aii kwan dinjii dzat nirinlii aii nąįį tthak gokwaa t'oonchy'aa. Oonjuk gwich'in nąįį łyaa aiits'a' zhyaa tthak nigiinjik t'iginchy'aa.	That Captain Ray I'm talking about, he built that store and brought a lot of food with the steamboat; he was going to stay there and those people who were going to stay there all died. They were Outside people and they all died off.
Ąąha' Gwichyaa Zhee izhik. Izhik zhyaa yi'eendaa zhyaa tąįh choo nin'ee chy'aa zhyaa tthak vihtł'eech'ąąhtłik.	Yes, in Ft. Yukon. At that time out in the middle of the river there used to be a big hill and it's all worn away now.
Aaa! shitseii gwintł'oo neeshreegwąąhchy'aa naagwaah'ąį' neenjik zhyaa vaanoodlit goodlit t'oonchy'aa.	Ah, grandchild! It was very poor at that time, and finally little by little the white people came.
Aii googaa łąą dinjii kwaa ts'a' gohch'it zhyaa gweendaa shriit'agwąhtsii ree yeeduk hee ree gaanigwigwii'aii roo.	Even so there were not very many people but here and there, from time to time, they sometimes came around.
Akwat jyaa doonchy'aa t'oonchy'aa. Zhyaa nehshrit zhyaa vaanoodlit nąįį goodlit t'oonchy'aa.	That's the way it was. The white people just came gradually.

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19 Care of the sick

Bloodletting was the most common traditional medical practice. The application of heat and a kind of acupuncture are also mentioned. Incisions were made in a person's eyelids when he was suffering from snowblindness; Belle tells of doing this herself. Then she tells how women helped a mother during childbirth. She considers the modern practice of giving birth lying down worse than the traditional manner of crouching or kneeling; interestingly, her point of view is supported by some modern birth clinics. Belle goes on to tell how the baby was swaddled and placed in a cradle of birchbark and skins.

Aiitł'ee ree
tr'iinin shats'an dhidlit khan shats'an dhidlit ts'a' aii
izhik t'ee łyaa
k'eejit ihłįį gwiizhik shats'an dhidlit ts'a' ree
shoahthaa aii shits'i' vakwaa roo.

After I got married
I had my firstborn right away and after I bore him,
immediately—
I bore him when I was very young and
then he died.

Aaa! shitseii
nihłigwilii ragwaa'aa roo.
Diigwiindak hee chan ree
diithąį'
anach'arahtrak.
Chan ree diinkyaa
dzat gweezhaa ts'uh kii nahąą
aii googaa
chan tr'iit'aa jii
diideeghan tthak eenjit.
Gwinzįį veeragwahtsik tł'ee.

Ah, grandchild,
we did everything for each other.
When we got hurt
they
cut the skin open some way.
They even cut
the vein under your tongue,
even that
they cut,
when something was wrong with your chest
You have to prepare and make everything ready.

Akwat t'ee
jii dinindee gwiłts'ik
jii diint'ee ch'andzu' k'it t'inchy'aa aii
jyaa dirilik ts'a'
aii ch'andzuu ji' naa'ąį' izhik chan k'eiich'ii dzik kwaii haa jyaa dagwagwah'in.
Dah goondak ts'a' it'ee gwinzįį.

And when
we have sore eyes,
they even cut it inside
that way,
they cut it inside there with something broken, that's what they do.
They draw blood and then it's all right.

Akwat ts'a'
zhyaa dineekhashran'ee chan oondaa kik luu nindhaa zhyaa k'eiich'ii tsal zhit zhyaa
aii izhik kii t'agah'in gwich'in
aii nijin khashran'ee naga'ak.

And when
we have a pain, they take a little hot ashes,
I think they put a rock there,
where the pain is coming out.

Datthak
idi'it gaa'in ts'a'
chųų dhaa chan
niht'eeriikak izhik chan duuyee jidii zhit t'arahah'yaa gǫǫ.
Daatłih k'ik choh chan kwaa akwat.

Akwat zhyaa gwigwiindak hee
zhyaa gwananch'arahtrit ts'a' aii dah gooraąhtraa ts'a' nizii neegaadhak roo.
Akwat jyahts'a' digii'in ts'a'
dinjii shrinilii drąįį gaa kwaa.
Tr'injaa ch'ihłak geetak hee
dinjii oąąhshii gwintł'oo daghan kwat ts'a' jii diingin tee
gwiłts'ik
diideeghan zhit gwiłts'ik
kwaii haa gwiłts'ik geenjit thahtsal haa vatatthaaranahtthak
aii ree nihts'ii t'irilik.

It'ee chan veenjit gwinzįį nineegwaadhak.

Sheek'aii Eliza shaaghan
Rose vahan
łi'haa dinjii oąąhshii t'inchy'aa.
Aii shandaa chan t'ii'in gwik'iighai' ree.

Shitseii, łi'haa zhyaa
gook'eegwąąhtii ts'aii t'igii'in gwich'in.
Dinjii shrinilii draii googaa ninjich'agwadhat kwaa ts'a' dinjii oąąhshii aii t'ee ree doctor gaa'įį roo.

Łi'haa dinjii
vigwihehkwaa googaa geetak hee nizii neegahtsik googahnyaa.
Aii gwaał'in kwaa.
Diindaa shandaa tr'oonjii.

Shii googaa diindee gwizhit gwiht'ii t'oonchy'aa roo.

Zhyaa gwinich'iht'ii haa chan
aaa! shitseii gwintł'oo
dinjii tr'oaahshii
gaariindaii gwintsal gwinzįį gaa
shaa gweech'in kwaa ts'a' ree duuyee juk akoodishi'in roo.

And by all that
when they do it,
and you could use steambaths too
but there were no containers then.
There were no big dishpans.

And when they got hurt
they just cut open their skin and the blood drained out and they felt better.
That is what they did and
they didn't even think about doctors.
There was one woman
who was a doctor and really knew what she was doing, and when somebody's arm
hurt
or when somebody's body hurt,
someone else would put a needle through the arm:
they put it through from side to side.
And the person would get better after that.

My aunt, old Eliza,
Rose's mother,
was really good at curing people.
She was doing it in my lifetime.

Grandchild, really
something was watching over them, I guess.
They didn't even think about doctors, they cured people and that was their doctor.

Really, people
were sometimes about to die, but they made them better, so they say.
I didn't see that.
I saw it when they drew blood.

Even I cut inside a person's eye.

I cut him open but,
grandchild, now
I can't do that curing
at all because
I cannot see, so now I can't do it.

Tsyaa
gwidzuu
ch'ihłak yeedit
Maggie David gwinyaa
gwiintth'ak dǫhłii
Paul Solomon
vijuu
Maggie
aii vigii ch'ihłak yee'at gwa'an
Ervin
aii łyaa vindee gwiizųų.

Yee'at t'ee
zhyaa diik'at deedhizhii.

Aiits'a' neech'in'al tł'ee
łeehahaii
"Yaagha' vindee gwint'ii," jyaa chan ree shahnyaa.
Akwat diinindee gwizhit gwiht'ii gaashandaii kwaa roo.

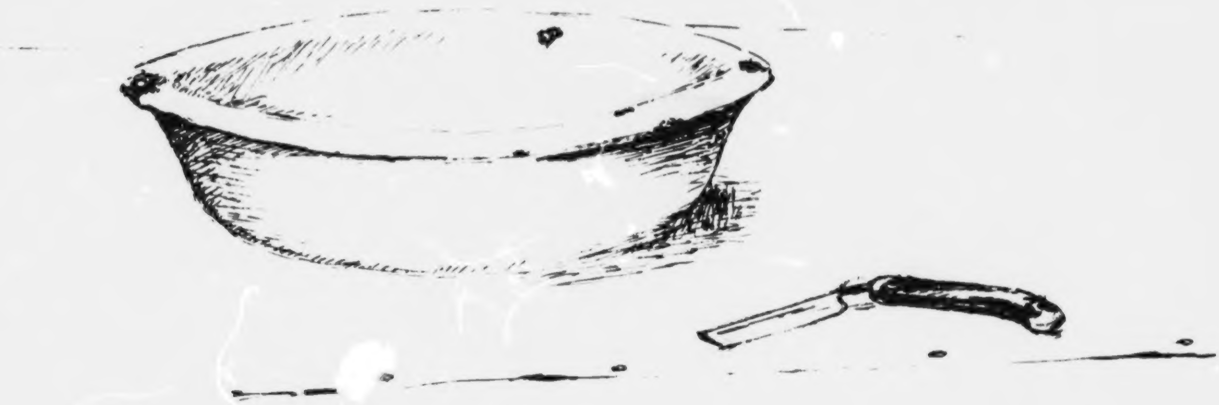
Akwat ree shitseii
John aii natsal
shigii vigii
aii shaa t'inchy'aa
đhichįį.
Gwiizhik ree
"Zhyaa nindee gwahaał'yaa nindee neegwadąąhkat," vaihnyaa.

One
poor
young man down there—
a woman named Maggie David,
I suppose you've heard of her,
Paul Solomon's
younger sister
Maggie,
well, one of her sons,
Ervin
had sore eyes.
There
he arrived at Shuman House.

After he ate
he was going somewhere
and he told me, "Cut that guy's eye."
Well, I didn't know how to cut inside an eye.

And my grandchild
John, who was small,
my son's son
was staying with me.

Meanwhile
I said to him, "I'm going to look at your eye, so why don't you flip up your eyelid."



Akwat tsuu
shantł'ee deedhałtin ts'a' deeshohshrii vatąįh gwanlįį choh haa
ts'a' dindee jyaa dinlik.
Dzaa vik'eevęę daa tłok choo dha'aii.

Aiits'a' t'ee
vindee
jyaa dał'in gwiizhik daa ninląįį.

Aiits'a' ch'agwank'ąą chan t'ihłik
aii gwiizhik yaaghat tr'iinin tr'ineedhat.
John natsal
aii
ch'iitsii tyąą yehzhee nidiintrat.
Aii vadaa nindhaa haa jii jyaa dii'in.

Akoh
"Dhinchii," ree vaihnyaa.

Akwat khaa
tthak
ree dhichįį.

Kwat ts'a' nihkaa
vanh ch'adhaa ałkhii vitįį gwiizųų kwaa
dhałtsuu aii eenjit ch'ahoołtł'įį hoiidhoo jyaa shi'in shee khagwideetrat.
Jeiinchy'aa tthak łąą sheenjit yindhoo.
Gwintł'oo tsee'in iilik gwandaa t'agwąhtsii tsee'in shinlik t'aihnyaa.

Izhik t'ee dinindee gwiit'uu t'oonchy'aa.

Percy chan dakwai' akhąhtil roo.

Aaa!
"Shitseii yaaghat nakwai' k'eehaaldaii," vaihnyaa aii
gwiizhik shrii tsal dachan tsal haa oihtą'.

Vatth'an łoodhałjik gwiizhik t'ee dachan tsal vatthąį' aałtsit k'iinin zhyaa goołtrat.
Chųų tr'aat'aa k'it łąą t'iizhik.
"Shitseii chan geh'at," vaihnyaa.
Izhik chan gitr'ii'ee.
Vęętak hee vanach'ałtrit.

And I put a pillow
on my lap and I had a straight razor with a long handle,
and he did with his eye as I said.
Right here around the edge was a big blood clot.

Then
while I was
doing that to his eye the blood came gushing out.
So I did the other side also,
and while I was doing that the child awoke.
Little John
took that
can and put it under him quickly.
His warm blood came out like this.
So
I told him, "Go to sleep now."
And
all evening
he slept.

So the next
morning I had a skin I was tanning, and there wasn't much left to do on it,
so I put it on the pole I had for it and started to scrape it, and he took it and did it for me.
I had made him so happy he scraped it all for me.

That's when I cut somebody's eye.

Also, Percy sprained his ankle.

Ah!
grandchild, I want to feel your feet, I said to him,
while I was holding a pocket knife and a stick.

I grabbed hold of the skin of his leg with the forked stick and cut it across there.
Just like I cut into water.
"Grandchild," I said, "another place too."
He didn't like it.
So when he wasn't looking, I cut that place too.

Shitseii łąą doctor agwąhtsii gwigwitr'it gwanlįį t'igwinyaa.
It'ee ree veenjit gwinzįį.
Jyaa digwii'in haa yeenaa dinjii ndaa nach'aatsi' t'oonchy'aa.

Aaa! shitseii
tr'iinin
nąįį zhyaa ree tr'injaa nąįį
lęįį haa gook'eegaahtii nahąą.
Akwat t'ee giłts'ik dąį' tr'injaa nąįį
dzaa
k'izhaa gaa gaadii
goodheedhaat'it jyaa dagoorąhthan gwiizhik dzaa geedan t'ee diigwantą'.

Aii gwiizhik
jii dingin haa jyaa
gwint'aii jyaa darąhthan dehthat tr'iłdii.

Aii gwiizhik t'ee tr'iinin gwilik.

Yeedit Ąhbit t'ee jyaa diizhik ts'a'
vaagoodlit t'inchy'aa.
Khaiinjii dahan diłkhwąįį
t'inchy'aa.
Dinjii googaa giyeechaajil łii.

Aiits'a' nihdeiizhii
ts'a' zhyaa ree vavat jyaa ree dishizhik.

Akwat
it'ee vaa neeshraahaatth'ak
vaa neeshraahiltth'at ts'a' ree zhyaa
jyaa dii'in
chan neeshraa'oonahdįį.
Dzaa nihts'ii shoonjik chan jyaa dineiilik
ts'a' shriit'ąhkhyuk
t'ałthan gwiizhik it'ee tr'iinin goodlit.

Jii shigin tthak łąą ch'ichį' k'it t'iizhik.
Jyaa chan digwii'in t'oonchy'aa.
Jyaa gwizhrii digwii'in.
Zhyaa ree dak tr'aa'ee ts'a' geedąhzhrii adagaagii łii roo.
Zhyaa ree tr'injaa gwiizhik oozhee
diintł'eetsįį nihky'aa diinanleechyaa jyaa diginchy'aa roo.

Aii gwiizhik jii dak tr'ontą' ts'a'
diit'ąįį datthak
haa jyaa doonchy'aa.

My grandchild, it's as much work as a doctor, what we did.
He was all right after that.

That's the way we did a long time ago, through the generations.

Ah! grandchild,
there were a lot of women
that took care of each other, you see;
when they were in labor some women
would be there
sitting in front of them
holding their bodies, and they would also hold onto us.

Meanwhile
with both arms
we would hold her firmly up off the ground.
Then the child would be born.

Down there, Ąhbit they call her,
she was born like that.
She almost killed her mother,
she did.
Even the men got tired.

So I went down there and
I came in and sat in front of her.

She was in labor and had contractions.
She was in labor and just doing this,
this way.
She had contractions but they stopped.
She grabbed hold of me and then
shortly
while I was holding her the baby came.

My arms felt like they were dead.

That's what we always did.
That's all we did.
Nowadays they just lie flat on their backs and nobody helps them.

At that time when women
were in labor, that's how we treated them.

We would hold them up
with all our strength
and while we did that

Gwiizhik t'ee tr'iinin danatth'ak.
Chy'aa chan juk chan ree zhyaa ree dak gaa'ee ts'a' chan tr'iinin gwilik łii roo.

Aii ree
tr'injaa nąįį khaiinjich'iidhat gwik'it t'oonchy'aa.
Datthak zhyaa vach'at'oorąąh'ąįį roo.
Tr'injaa ghat nihłanjiineegwaadaa ts'a' łąą
nihłaraali' kwaa ts'a' zhyaa
diinch'at'oorąąh'ąįį nihts'ii diintthaathai' kak diinleechyaa haa dzaa tr'igwiłtthaii nahąą izhik łyaa shraragwaaghan nahąą.
Jyahts'a' t'ee shats'an tr'iinin atr'agwąąhthat.
Akwat diironta' kwaa ts'a' ree zhyaa dak tr'aa'ee izhik tr'ikhit ree ts'ik nint'aii gwanlįį gwich'in ree.
Diik'ąąhtii nąįį zhyaa ree
diinoolzhii roo.
Shitseii, łyaa dak tr'aa'ee
neeshraahchy'aa
adagaatsii łii giky'aaljik gwats'an łyaa ree goots'ii t'ihchy'aa roo.

Nihk'eerąąhtii gwintł'oo
shraragwaadhan
gwik'it t'igii'in kwaa.

Akwat
tr'agwazhraii
gwee'an googaa gwiheezyaa
jihnyaa googaa yeenin k'eegwaradal.
K'eegwaadhat gwitr'it t'inchy'aa
tr'agwazhraii jihnyaa googaa.

Noonlyaa
zhyaa ree
tr'injaa nąįį khaiinjich'iijii gwaał'in.
K'ik ts'ik k'idahotai' aii
gwach'aa tłik
aii jidii ghoo
gahtsik aii zhit
zhyaa ree nyą'

the baby would be born.
It used to be like that, but now women just lie down on their backs and that's the way they have kids now.
And
it seems like women suffer a lot that way.
Everybody used to help take care of the sick.
The women all took turns and really
they all took care of her and it was
a comfort to her when they took care of her, they held up her buttocks with their palms and eased her, you see.

That's the way I had my babies.

When nobody helps us, we just lie on our backs and I think the labor is harder.

The people who took care of us
all gathered around.
Grandchild, really, when they lie on their backs
they suffer
a lot, and since I found that out I don't approve of what they do.
When we used to take care of one another it
comforted us
but now they don't do that.
Now
even around here
it would be good;
I told them but they still go away [to have babies in the hospital].
It is the Lord's doing;
I tell them but they still do that.
And
also
I see a lot of these women suffer.
That straight, long, narrow basket,
and rags,
they made a round bundle
and inside it
they put soft moss

tsuu ts’a’ geh dhaa zhit zhyaa tr’iinin
jyaa digilik roo.

Akwat ree
gwahadaadhaa
giik’aa t’ilik ts’a’ ree nihk’igiihiitł’uk ts’a’
ree gookwaii ląįį
gaa neech’ahatrak ts’a’ deedoodohoghal.

Aiits’a’
tr’iinin chan jyaa dinchy’aa ts’a’ chan
jii vigin jyaa dinchy’aa ts’a’ chan giyaa
t’agah’in t’inchy’aa.
Ts’a’ it’ee shriit’agąhtsii ts’a’ dagant’ee
gwadąįį chan daganli’ haa jyaa digii’in
chan googąh’įį t’inchy’aa.
Aiitł’ee k’eegijuu gohju’ hee k’ik ghoo zhit
googilik t’iginchy’aa.

Łyaa gwiindhaa tr’iinin t’agąhthan
t’iginchy’aa.

Shitseii, aii neegihiinjik googaa tr’iinin
gwilik.
Geetak hee dachaavał kak googaa t’ee
vashraatth’ak googaa t’ee val tr’aachaa
gwinyaa t’oonchy’aa roo.
Aii ree shandaa akwaa.

It’ee
tr’eenjyaa gwiizhik
tr’iinin gwilik googaa
one day gwizhrii hee adak’aa t’iich’ik
adan zhrii.
Gwiizhik jyaa haadhak.
Chan jyaa digii’in gwizhrii.

Ch’ihłan drin gwizhrii ree it’ee ree
tr’iinin tsyaaghal ts’a’ t’ee ree
dazhoo ik zhit hee ree tr’iinin ree
vitsit dhidii.
Aii gwiizhik chan it’ee val googaa chan
ts’a’ k’eegwaadhat aii ineehahdak roo.

Aii shitseii
gwintł’oo dinjii duulee nilįį nąįį yeenaa
gwiindaii.

and rabbit skins, and inside that they
put the baby.

And
they put something warm on it
and laced it up from the feet to the neck
and drew a skin around it and bundled
it up.

Then
the child was like that
and they fixed its arms like this.
When they got a little bit bigger
they would let their arms loose.
After they started to crawl around, they
finally put them in that basket.

They kept the babies very warm.

Grandchild, even though they were out
there traveling around, the babies would
be born.
Sometimes even when she was in labor
she would be riding on the toboggan,
so they say.
That didn’t happen during my lifetime.

Then
while they were moving around
she would have the baby but
she would stay alone behind the rest
for one day.
Meanwhile, the others would leave.
That’s just what they did.

For only one day, then
she put the little infant
like that inside her fur parka
and the baby
stayed inside her clothing.
She would even have a sled of her own and
pull it herself.

Ah, grandchild,
those people were really hardy that lived
at that time.

20 Family history and life in the old days

Belle tells about the establishment of Shuman House, her family's usual permanent residence. She calls John Shuman, who first settled there, "mother's brother." It is not clear whether he was actually her mother's brother, or the son of her mother's sister; if the latter, he must have been around the same age as Belle's mother for her to call him by that kin term. William Ch'atth'aiindee, also called William Shuman, was John Shuman's brother. She remembers the coming of gas-driven boats, candles, and lanterns, and describes how people lit their houses in the old days. Then she tells something about traditional sewing and cooking, and gives a detailed description of the day-to-day work of women during winter nomadic hunts. She remembers the life of orphans and tells about the orphans she herself raised. Finally, she tells the story of another long-lived woman, whom she imitates by her devoted work for the church.

[Alice asked who lived at Shuman House.]

Shee'ii John Shuman ree aii tr'ookit t'inchy'aa kwaa. Aii gehnaa Nildhat Ti' viti' aii zhat gwinch'i' gwinyaa.	My uncle, John Shuman, was not the first one. Before that Nildhat Ti''s father settled there so they say.
Gehnaa nan goodlit gwats'an naa łagwaazhyaa ts'a' khik zhyaa dinjii gwats'a' k'eegwaadhat goo'aii t'oonchy'aa. Kwat t'ee łi'haa dinjii geełee haajil izhik t'ee zhat niriin'oo gǫǫ.	Before then, ever since the earth came to be, throughout the years, people always used to go and stay there. And after everybody left, that's when we came.
Aii t'ee shee'ii Deetree John oozhii aii vakwaiik'it zhat adant'ee t'inchy'a' akwat ts'a' izhik zhat niriin'oo ts'a' t'ee łyaa zhyaa nakhwakwaiik'it goodlit.	That was my uncle, Deetree John they called him; it was his village and so he stayed there too, and when we got there it became our village.
Jyaa doonchy'aa t'oonchy'aa nan goodlit gwats'an zhyaa yeenjit Simon vanahkak chan. Gehjit Diikwai' Dhich'ii garahnyaa chan. Jyaa doonchy'aa t'oonchy'aa. Zhik tthak zhyaa dinjii zhuu kwaiik'it łąą ninghuk kwaa ts'a' nihk'ehji' t'anginchy'aa gwaatth'aa t'oonchy'aa.	And the same way, ever since the earth began, up there, the place called Simon [Francis's] place is like that too. Up above there is what they call Diikwai' Dhich'ii too. That's the way it is. All the Indian people's settlements are all along the river up that way.

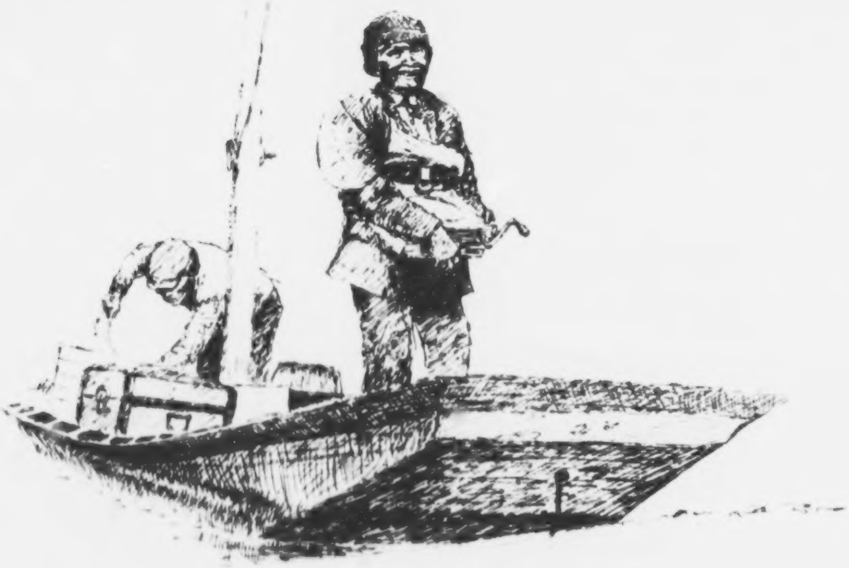
[Alice asks a question.]	
Zhat ninii'oo izhik gwats'at t'ee launch goodlit t'oonchy'aa roo. Aii yaaghat gasoline chan gasoline tr'iiłk'a' chan, aii t'ee tr'ookit.	When we two got there is when they started to have a launch. And that gasoline, the gasoline that burns [in lamps] too, that was the first time.
[Alice asks a question.]	
Łąįį haa zhrii łiriidaa geeghaii ts'a' akwaa roo. Kheedai' gwats'an it'ee nan nagoodlit tł'ee vijuu gwanaa gwats'an t'ee ree łąįį jyaa rihiłjil roo. Akwat yi'eenaa duuyee łąįį ehdan duuyee.	We only traveled with dogs, that's all we could do. A few years back, after you were born, a little while after that, we stopped using dogs. Before that there was no way we could get around without dogs.
[Alice asks a question.]	
Old Crow gwich'in nąįį t'ee ch'andaa ts'a' yi'eenji' Peel River garahnyaa izhik gwinii vaanoodlit chil'ee zhyaa diinshii ajyaa t'ee outside gwats'a' neegihiijyaa kwaii t'ii'in dǫhłii. Gwintł'oo dinjii chil'ee lęįį nąįį kwaii ach'ał'al tł'ee dzaa tr'ikhit neeshraałchy'aa.	The Old Crow people up at what they call Peel River, just some rich white people used to eat at our place; they were going Outside, I think. I fed a lot of those rich people, and now I am very poor here.
Aii datthak łąįį haa vaanoodlit tr'ik neehiijyaa googaa tthak łąįį haa zhrii. Shitseii, łyaa łąįį t'agwąąhchy'aa ch'adąį' łąįį googaa tthak jyaa rihiłjil roo.	They all had dog teams, all of them, even the white women traveled with dog teams. Grandchild, we really used dogs then, but now we've stopped.
[Alice asks a question.]	
Izhik t'ee k'ii tr'ii chan gwanlįį tr'ihchoo launch it'ee izhik gwanaa nitsii tr'ookit launch oonjik chan gasoline diłk'ą'.	At that time they had birchbark canoes and big boats, and also a launch; at that time your grandpa was the first man who bought a launch that burned gasoline.

Aaa! shitseii
łąą
launch yeedit launch tseedhaa
dhidlit gwąąh'in łii aii zhyaa oonjik łii roo.
Launch haa k'eediinoozhik haa ree
  deegwinyaa li'.
It'ee łi'haa
dinee aakin ch'iidlii ts'ąįį.
Akwat nitsii chan ree cigar chan ree diłk'a'.

Ah! grandchild,
really,
when he heard that launch down there
  was for sale,
he went and saw it and then he just
  bought it.
So they started to say, take us here and
  there in the launch.
And really,
it was just amazing how it was.
And your grandpa was smoking a cigar too.

Aaa! zhyaa ree
aakin tr'agwaa'įį haa zhyaa ree.
Akwat chan jidii
ch'iitsiidlii choo jidii
veek'eeraazhik
aii chan ree.

Ah! we just
stared at him in the boat.
And then we also
had a Victrola
that you put
that thing on.



Aaa! shitseii
gwintł'oo aakin ch'iidlii.
Tr'iginkhii dinjii dąąhchy'aa
gwik'it t'ee t'oonchy'aa.
Gwintł'oo aakin ch'igwiidlii gavaa gwaatsii.
Gwintł'oo ninghit kwaa datthak vagoodlit t'inchy'aa.

Kwat t'ee
gwikii khwaii daak'a' ts'ik zhrii
ts'a' gehnaa chan t'ee
neejok dhaa zhit
khwaii oodit kheegaazhik aii
jidii vizhit gwanlįį ch'iitsii tyąh
tsal tł'eegaadhak.
Aii zhit
dohshroo dagąįį
gandoo aii giighwai' zhit tilik gąąht'aii aii chan gahdrii.
Tł'ee vijuu gwanaa t'ee khwaii daak'a' ts'ik goodlit.

Aiitł'ee vijuu gwanaa chan
chųų daak'a'
aiitł'ee vijuu gwanaa chan gasoline.

Jyaa digwii'in naałigweedhaa
aii datthak shandaa gwizhrii t'igwii'in.

Aaa! neeshreegwąąhchy'a' t'oonchy'aa, jyaa doonchy'aa chan gaagwiindaii kwaa chan gwiginghan.

Oondaa
deedak
łuh oo'ok łuh neegahtraa ditį'
tł'oo tsal giiteelii haa
dachan k'iighai' gwich'in
dak łigeelyaa ts'a' oozhee chan nahjyaa dinchy'aa diitii łeegaathak ts'a' łuh diitii nihts'ii gwaghaih t'inchy'aa k'iidak ts'a' oodee k'iidak giin'ee chan dachan
t'inchy'aa aii haa
łuh dhagąįį gahtsik roo.

Akwat aii oondaa gwaak'a' roo
dachan.

Gwaak'a' ts'a' ree
gwizhit tthak ch'aadrii roo.

Ah! grandchild, it was really something!
As many people as go to church,
that's how many were out there.
It was fascinating to them.
Those things came about not very long ago.

Then
before that there were only candles
and before that
they brought oil down
from the north in sealskins and
whenever they got a little metal can
in it, in the grease,
they twisted a white cloth
and burned that for a candle, to give light.

Then after that candles came around.

After that, then,
kerosene,
and after that, gasoline.

That's how we did down through the years
and it all happened during my lifetime.

Ah! it was very poor, we didn't know anything about those things, but they made things.

Down there
down on the ground
they mixed dirt and sand and stuff like that
with a little grass and
I think they used a log to hold it,
and they piled it up one on the other, and there was thick moss in between it too, it was thick, with sand on both sides, and a log sticking up in the middle;
that was how it was,
and they mixed dirt with it.
And then they kept a fire going in the middle
on the log.

When that fire was going
the inside of the room was lit up.

Aiitł'ee vijuu gwanaa izhik t'ee neejok ghwai' chan
dohshroo gandoo zhit teegąąht'aii chan gahdrii
jyaa digii'in.

Aaa! shitseii
it'ee akǫ'.

After that, they began to burn seal oil
on a piece of twisted cloth and made light
that way.

Ah! grandchild,
let's quit.

[Alice asks a question.]

Tr'ihchoo goodlit
aii k'eiich'ii deeginlii aii
sell gahtsii k'iighai' k'eiich'ii tsal goodlit.
Tr'ookit chan gwintł'oo kwaa ts'a' jidii t'eegwaahchy'aa.

When the boat came around
they brought stuff
and sold it, and that's why we have things.
Not very much at first, only necessities.

[Alice asks a question.]

Aaa! shitseii łyaa nehshrit gwinzįį goodlit k'it t'oonchy'aa t'oonchy'aa
khee gwanaa diik'eehąąhtyaa nagwahaahtth'aa gwats'a' googaa łyaa gogwantrii ree.

Akhai' chan yeenii zhyaa chan gwach'aa chan oonii zhyaa ree nineegaadal.

Aii chan ree k'iighai' it'ee shriit'agwahtsii nagwaatth'at gwiizhik it'ee diinlat nąįį chan k'ąąhtii nagwaanąįį roo.
Jyaa digwii'in geh'an gwintsal gwinzįį t'oonchy'aa.

Ah! grandchild, it just came around very slowly, that's how it was.
A few years back before we had our pensions and things, it was hard too.

But then they sent clothes over here from out there.

Because of that, we had some things before the pensions started.
That's what we did, that's why it was good.

[Alice asks if she remembers who lived at Shuman House.]

Shoondee nąįį zhrii
shoondee Esaias chan
daga'at haa
diihaa gwigwich'įį, shoondee Robert chan.

Aiits'a' shoondee Charley chan khik diihaa t'inchy'aa,
shaghoii Alexander chan.

Akwat ts'a' yeedee Henry chan ndaa ts'a' goonjik aii chan.

My older brothers only,
my older brother Esaias
and his wife
were living with us, and my older brother Robert too.

And my older brother Charley always stayed with us too,
my brother-in-law Alexander too.

Then up there was Henry, too, and later he got married.

Akwat ts'a' juu zhat goihch'i' yindhan tthak diihaa gwich'įį ts'a' gwizhrii ts'a' khik dinjii gwanlįį roo.
Gwiizhik yeenii chan tr'ikhit łiriidaa.
Akwat nagahaazhrii nąįį chan yee'at gwats'a' jyaa dii'in
ts'a' łyaa dinjii gwanlįį gaa nihk'it t'igwiichy'aa roo.

Whoever wanted to live there, they all stayed with us, and so there were always plenty of people around.
Besides that, there were always people traveling up that way.
People who were going to go hunting went over there too.
So there were always a lot of people there all the time.

Kwat ts'a'
yaagha' Joe Ward chan yeeneenjuk hee chan
t'inchy'aa aii t'ee shigii neehidik hee tł'ee t'ii'in.
Aii chan nihkhan niłaraa'in kwaa.
Khyąh haa gwitr'it t'agwagwah'in ts'a' gwizhrii nagaazhrii kwaa haa, ndaa ts'a' chan nihłaa nagaazhrii
ts'a' gwizhrii ree.

And then
that man Joe Ward lived up above us,
after my son started to walk.
We didn't see each other very often.
All they did was trap and hunt, and later on they hunted together,
and that's all they did.

Łąą dinjii ehdan nagwaaghii kwaa roo.
Gwintł'oo shoondee nąįį jyaa dashagah'in haa łąą
giveh'at ninghuk zhyaa than t'iichy'aa kwaa roo.
Francis chan khik diihaa t'inchy'aa
injyaa haa.
Geetak chan shaghoii David chan ree.

There was never a time when there were no people.
That's the way my brothers treated me and I really
never stayed alone for a very long time.
Francis and his wife always
stayed with us too.
Sometimes my brother-in-law David too.

[Alice asks where they got beads.]

Yeenjit Old Crow Cadzow store gwąh'e' dąį'
aaa! daatł'oo t'inchy'aa.
Yahadanchii ts'a' tseedhaa yahtsii t'inchy'aa.
Shigii Sam tr'ookit tseedhaa iłtsąįį izhik sheenjit yuunjik t'inchy'aa.
Gwintł'oo vaa laraa nitsii dhałtsąįį
aii
tr'oonadhak
haa chan toh shiłtsąįį.

When Cadzow had a store over at Old Crow
ah! it was expensive.
He counted every bead and sold them for furs.
When my son Sam made his first catch of furs, he bought some for me.
I made a lot of money with that,
and what
was left over
he made this walking stick with.

[Alice speaks.]

Tr'injaa nąįį ch'agahkhii roo.
Vadzaih dhaa dazhoo
gahkhii ts'a' ik giyahtsii ts'a'
dazhoo thal chan giyahtsii
vitsii vakwai' jyaa dinchy'aa.

Aiits'a'
jii tthak jyaa dinchy'aa.
Jyaa dąhthee naa'ai' ts'a' giyaa khathalchaa.

Akwat ts'a'
dazhoo thał
heelyaa chan gahkhii
ik heelyaa chan gahkhii.

Aiitł'ee dagakąį' nąįį
dazhoo dzirh chan gahtsii aii chan gwitsįį.

Akwat chan geh ts'ee gitł'uu dzaa gwitsįį ts'a' ree
dinjii zhyaa
gwiindhaa, gwiink'oo googaa diginin kak
ch'agahąhdak.

Gwintł'oo
gwiindhaa
t'iginchy'aa.
Aii tr'injaa chan ree
aii chan
dazhoo thal vakwai' vitsįį zhoo'yuu.

Akwat t'ee
dazhoo ik
dazhoo ts'aii goots'a' t'inchy'aa tr'injaa nąįį
andiitįį.
Aiits'a' dazhoo ts'ąįį gwizhrii givehłi' goo'ik haa tthat dazhoo ts'ąįį goothai' ts'ąįį nahąą.

Aii gwiizhik chan dazhoo dzirh zhit giiljik.
Geedan t'ee chan geh tseh.
Aaa! shitseii, gwintł'oo gwiindhaa dagohotł'ii t'agoorahnyaa.

Akwat
dinjii aii
tr'injaa ch'ahkhii jyaa dii'in gwiizhik t'ee dachaaval aih haa ahtsii.
Aii dachaaval ahtsik aii chan tr'ahgąįį k'iighai' nizįį.

The women tanned skins.
They tanned caribou skins with the fur on
and made parkas with them and
they made fur pants
with feet attached, like this.

And then
there were fringes around the top.
It was this long, and they tied a cord around it as a belt.

And then
they tanned
the skin they would make fur pants with
and they tanned skins to make parkas.

And for their husbands
they also made fur mittens.

Then they wove rabbit skins together for a cap,
and the man was really
warm, even though it was cold,
they would wipe their faces.

They were really
warm
dressed that way.
And the women
also
wore fur pants with feet attached.

And
the fur parka
had the fur inside, that's how the women
wore their parkas.
And the fur was always inside, their pants and parkas all had fur inside, you see.

And also they wore fur mittens.
They too wore rabbit-skin caps.
Ah! grandchild, they really dressed warmly.

And
as for the man,
while the woman was tanning, he made toboggans and snowshoes.
The toboggan he made had to be dried first so it would be good.

[Alice asks a question.]

Aaa! shitseii
aii tthah choo
gwankatthak aiitł'ee at'oohju' hee khaiindoo haa.

Akwat gehdaa jyaa dii'in chan jii khaiindoo aii haa
jyaa dii'in.

Gwintł'oo
gogwantrii.

Juk ree thahtsal haa ree
akwat gwiizhik chan aii tr'injaa chan gwiizhik vaka'ahchy'aa.

Yeendaa
dachan łankheeraahtsi' joł aii haa
shih tsal oondaa gwaak'a' k'iindaa itich'igiił'ee.
Geetak hee
oodee tły'aa
gohochaa oo'ok
k'aii
thahtsal gahtsii aii itły'aach'igiłchaa ts'a' aii haa shih jyaa dagąhthan aii t'ee yeendaa needąąhvaa ts'a' gwiizhik t'ee gwitr'it t'agwagwah'in.

Ah! grandchild,
with an awl
she poked holes and afterward the thread.

And she continued that way, poking the hole, then using
the thread.

It was very
difficult.

Nowadays there are needles.
And while the woman was doing that, she also cooked.
Then
they shaped roasting sticks and on them
they would cook pieces of food over the fire
Sometimes
there was a string
tied above the fire
and they would make
a little willow skewer and tie it to it, and while they went about their work, they would have that suspended above the fire cooking the meat.

[Alice speaks.]

Tły'ah ts'ik aii t'ee
ch'adhah tły'aa vahochaa aii
oo'ok k'aii
zhrah k'it t'inchy'aa aii k'aii tsii gohochaa ts'a' dzaa shih geedząąhtsit.
Jyaa dinchy'aa ts'a' oodee gohochaa.

Akwat ts'a' gał haa chan
gał ch'ok nihtsįį
gahtsii aii chan shih jyaa darąhthan aii chan oondaa itich'irįįł'ee roo.

Aiits'a' aii needarąąhchaa ts'a'
drin hee zhyaa vikehgaachy'aa.

Akwat lidii chan duuyee kwaa roo.
Lidii kwaa akwat shih gahvir aii shih ga'aa aii chų' haa zhrii chan giichų' dinii roo
jyaa gwizhrii ree.

It was a very thin string,
a skin string was tied to that
willow up there
like a hook and on that the meat was hung.
It was tied up above like that.

And then they would take a stick
pointed on both ends,
and put the food on it and cook it by the fire like that too.
And they would keep turning it around,
and cook it that way all day.

Then there was no tea.
There was no tea, so they boiled food and drank its broth, that's all they had to drink.

Aaa! shitseii
akwat ts'a' dinjii aih ahtsik
tł'ee chan tr'injaa yaghat ts'a'
at'oohju' hee chan yakwaihłąįį chan dinjii yats'a' tr'injii.
Akwat ts'a' yaaghat niivyaa chan heelyaa gwintł'oo vadzaih dhaa lęįį tr'ahkhii t'igwinyaa.

Aii
chan
tr'injaa nąįį yiighal ts'a' zhyaa ch'ihłok hee niivyaa eegatrak.
Jyaa digii'in nihts'igiinyaa ts'a'
zhik gwach'aa giighan aii ree geedąhthan,
geedąhthan gwizhrii.
Aaa! shitseii! gwintł'oo tr'injaa nąįį khaiinjich'igiłjik gwich'in.
Dinjii gwintł'oo gwitr'it t'agwah'in kwaa.
Akwat ts'a' tr'injaa
it'ee
yehdok tr'iinin nąįį chan
akwat gwach'aa tłik giikak diłchųų jidii dagats'at ch'aa kwaii haa.
Jyaa dinchy'aa ts'a' tr'iinin nąįį neegitł'uu gwiizhik it'ee ree dinjii ree
nahaazhrii gwats'a' gihijyaa,
gihijyaa ts'a' t'ee geedąhthan.
Tr'iinin nąįį neegitł'uk geedant'ee neegiitł'uk ts'a' t'ee
chahak ts'a'
yee'at dachaavał
aii kak
zhik niivyaa aii zhit noiidoo ts'a' jidii ts'ik diyahtsik jyaa digiyah'in jyaa dineegiyilik ts'a'
aii vakak t'ee jidii giizhit iłchųų digichyahch'aa haa jyaa dagah'in
aii gwizhit t'ee tr'iinin natsal nąįį
gaadlii.
Akwat łąįį chan lęįį kwaa googaa
gwiizhik tr'injaa chan gwiizhik
tr'iinin aghwaa gwiizhik
t'ii'in nahąą.

Ah! grandchild,
after the man made snowshoes,
then the women
would fill the snowshoes, and the men would put in the foot part later.
And if someone wanted to make a skin tent, she would have to tan a lot of caribou hides.

That
too
the women would work on and help each other, and make it really fast.
That's the way they did it, but
when they made their own clothes,
they did it by themselves.
Ah! grandchild, those women really had a hard time, I bet.
A man didn't work so hard.
And the women
and
the children also
slept on worn-out clothes and old torn blankets.
That was how it was, and the woman would dress the children while the man
got ready to go hunting,
and the men would leave and the others were alone.
They dressed the kids, and they also got dressed, and then
she would go outside and
over there was a toboggan;
on that
she rolled the skin tent into a cylinder and flapped it over again, and
on top of that, wrapped in what they slept in, and their torn mattresses, the little children
were put.
And there weren't many dogs, so
even though she was carrying a baby at the time,
she had to do this.

Akwat it'ee
tthak val ch'ahchaa tr'iinin nąįį chan dilik it'ee
łąįį tły'ah dilik.

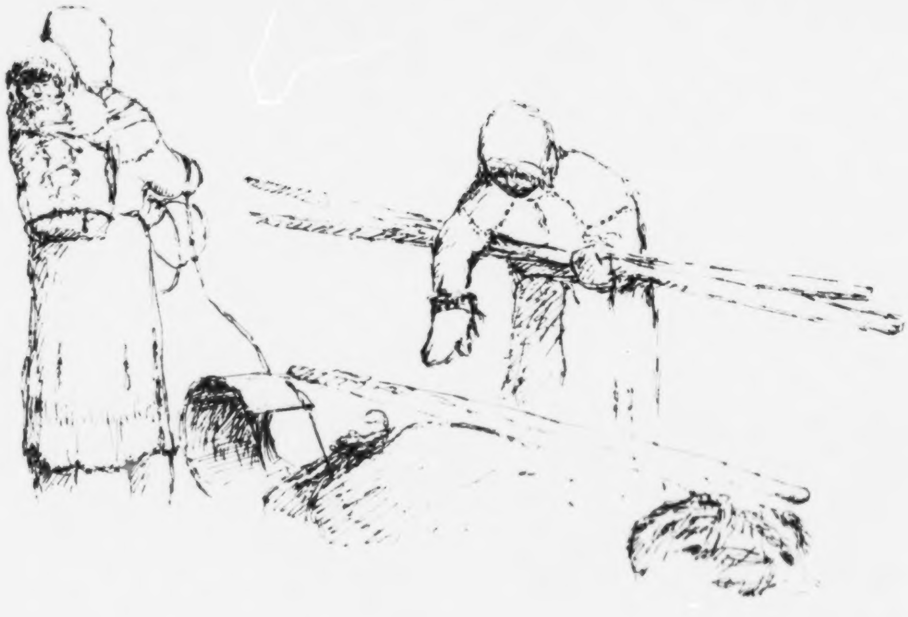
It'ee jeiinchy'aa
vał
niivyaa chan
yeedee k'it t'inch'ii
jyaa dąąhchy'aa
oodak haa'ee haa
veelin.
Aii oondaa dachaavał ki' ghat chan jeiinchy'aa oonjit vał ki' chan jyaa dinchy'aa.
Aii nji' ts'a' tr'iin'ee aii onta' nadhat.

Akwat oondaa
niriheenjyaa
khazhaagadhak
tł'ee ah chan oonaa nigiilik.

And then
she tied everything on the toboggan and put the kids on it and harnessed the dogs.

Then like that,
the toboggan
with the skin tent on top
and on top of that
as many kids as she had—
it was pretty high
around the edge.
The load was tied to the toboggan front and back.
A stick stuck out from the back and she held onto that.

And when
they arrived at their destination
they would shovel the snow out
and then put spruce boughs on top of it.



Aiits'a' gwizhit tthak na'aagiilik.
Aiitł'ee t'ee niivyaa chanh gwi'eegiitthaii.

Oodok
haa'ee chan tły'aa giyaa niivyaa chanh danaahtł'uu aii
jyaa digiyah'in.
Zhik k'iindaa dachan chan jyaa dinchy'aa aii chan oodee chan digiyahchaa.
Zhik tthak gogwahtsik tł'ee t'ee niivyaa gwachan łihts'eegikhyuu ts'a' aii
jyaa digiyah'in.

Jyaa
digiyah'in gohch'it oodee gwinzįį deegiyahchaa ts'a'
giichan tthak
gwinzįį gwahtsii zhah
tthak
giichan needhak.

Aiitł'ee t'ee
yeendaa
kik
dachan nihts'įį niriichik.

Oo'ok
ts'iivii haaghoo aii vaghak kak łuh
aii keegii'in aii yeendaa gwiheek'ą' izhik jyaa digiyilik.
Dachan nihts'įį vaghaih t'inchy'aa aii gwintsal ehdak t'inchy'aa
gwiizhik it'ee gogwaahk'ik roo.

Aiits'a' oodee hee zhyaa
gwintsal jyaa doonchy'aa
googaa k'iidak
łat
haa jyaa digwii'in.

Aiits'a' yee'at gihdeech'agąąhvyaa ts'a' t'ee ree gwiindhaa.

Akwat
na'aagiilik ts'a'
jyaa digii'in niivyaa gagaahchaa aiitł'ee
it'ee ehjyaa traa chan oondok traa chan
khagikyaa aii
dagakhahk'at kak
tr'iinin aghwaa ji' googaa nihk'it.

Then they put spruce boughs down all over the tent spot.
And after that they put tent poles up all around the base.
Up there
there was a beam and they tied those sticks to it
like that.
There was a beam going the other way, and they tied that also.

After they put the frame together,
they tied the skin all around it,
like that.
Finally
they put the whole thing on the frame and
around the bottom edge
they banked it with snow
all
around the bottom.

After that
out in the middle
for the fireplace
they put a big log on each side.

Outside
they took dirt from the roots of a fallen tree
and piled it up in the fireplace.
There's a log on each side of it, and they piled dirt in the middle
and built a fire on top of it.

And up on top
there was a little opening
but even so
the smoke drew really well.

Then they put something over the doorway and it was warm.

Then
they spread spruce boughs and
tied the tent over it, and after that
they chopped firewood outside and
brought the firewood back
on their shoulders,
even if they were packing babies.

Akwat tr'iinin gwilęįį nit'eeraahnąįį haa aii tree googaa nihk'it.	And the poor baby just bounced around in back, even if it was crying, just the same.
Akwat ts'a' traa oo'ee niilik chan aii traa jyaa dąhjyaa ree tr'ahtsii. Yaa'at k'ii'ee ree zhyaa traa khadąąhk'at gwahtsik.	And then she brought the wood and chopped it so long. Out there she made a pile of wood.
Aii gwiizhik tr'iinin nąįį ch'adąį' hee eegwaahk'ik k'ii'ee nihdeehahdal aii gwiizhik t'ii'in.	Meanwhile, she'd already put her children inside, where she had a fire going while she was doing that.
Akwat aii traa ehdaa tr'andak ts'a' gwiizhik t'ee nahąą, gwiizhik it'ee nihdahak ts'a' chan it'ee akoh tr'ihee'aa eenjit chan gwitr'it t'agwah'in zhyaa ree.	After she was done with the wood, and it was getting dark, she went inside and started working on their meal, that's all.
Aaa! shitseii! tr'injaa nąįį gwintł'oo neeshraahchy'aa ilii. Eeriijyaa geetak hee ch'araahk'ee geetak hee akwaa.	Ah! grandchild, those poor women, they were just worked down. The men came home and sometimes they'd shot something, and sometimes not.
Jyaa digwii'in haa geenjyaa gwizhrii duuyee tr'igwich'įį t'igwinyaa. Shin khaii haa nihk'it. Gwihch'it zhyaa ree nin da'an gwizhiik'įį k'it ree t'irinchy'aa ndaa ts'a'.	Doing that, they constantly moved around and never stayed in one place. Summer and winter they did the same. But now people are just like animals sleeping in their dens.
[Alice speaks.]	
Shitseii, tr'injaa eetak gwitr'it t'agwah'in gitr'ii'ee k'it t'inchy'aa nąįį goozhee tr'ikhit łat gwanljįį hee'.	Grandchild, some women that don't like to work, it's like there's always a lot of smoke in their houses.
Zhyaa dinindee chųų tr'andhadlaii ts'a' t'ee. Ni'ęę vizhee gwan'at goo'ąįį ts'a' łąą łat tr'ihiłjii kwaa.	Tears come out of our eyes. My mother's house was outside the main settlement, and there was no smoke in it.
Izhik it'ee dzaa tr'igwich'ii gwiizhik t'ee Loola Old Rampart gwats'at ginkhii dzaa nihee łii.	Then while we were staying here, Loola the preacher came down from Old Rampart.

Aiits'a' oo'ok nijin hee zhuk dhidii łii. Ni'ęę vizhee zhyaa ree gwiildrat.	I don't know where he stayed out there. He always came to my mother's house.
Yeendee dak naraazhii izhik shoondee videek'it Englis ts'at iłtsuu aii kak gwizų' hee izhik hee kwigwił'ąįį. Ni'ęę vizhee gwizhrii ree kogwąh'e' łat kwaa dǫhłii.	Over in the corner when people stayed here, was my older brother's bed, and he put a Hudson's Bay blanket on it and sat there on that nice bedding. He always stayed in my mother's place, I guess because there was no smoke there.
Aiits'a' oo'at gwa'an nijin t'inchy'aa tr'ikhit łat gwanlįį aiits'a' zhyaa ni'ęę vizhee zhyaa ree gwats'a' ch'irihilghaa k'it t'iizhik łii.	Where he stayed out there there was a lot of smoke, and so when he got tired of it he came over here to get away from it.
Aaa! shitseii! neeshreegwaahchy'aa gwitr'it gwint'aii gwaatsii.	Ah! grandchild, times were very hard and people worked hard.
Shitseii, nagaazhrii ch'agaahk'ee aii kwan geedaa t'igwinyaa.	Grandchild, we survived on the food they hunted and shot.
Akwat khehłan t'oonchy'aa ji' gwintł'oo shih kwaa.	If we stayed in one place, there wouldn't be any food.

[Alice asks if all they did was hunt.]

Aii gwizhrį' tr'injaa chan thok dinjii chan thok.	That's all; and women did things by themselves and men by themselves.
Aaa! shitseii! tr'injaa gwilęįį tr'iinin nąįį di'įį gwiizhik zhyaa ree tr'ahadal akwat nats'aa.	Ah! grandchild, the poor women had the kids while the men just went out hunting. That's how it was.
Zhyaa ree joonchy'aa gwintł'oo nadanagohochaa ts'a' gwintsii gwitr'it nilįį aii ree. Yeendaa nijin niheenjyaa izhik jyaa doonchy'aa neegwahahtsyaa tł'ee hee gohju' k'eeneegiheedal.	It [the skin tent] was all tied here and there and there was a lot of work to it. When she got to her destination she had to put it all together again, and then the men would come back.
Gwintł'oo tr'ootree ts'a' t'agwahtsii łąą tr'injaa gwitr'it gwanlįį. Duuyee tr'injaa k'eegwaadhat.	I feel like crying, that's how much the women worked. Women could never give the orders.
Oo'ok kweetee tr'aga'oo hee shih tsal givintł'eegiitrak.	When they [orphans] went out visiting people would hand them something to eat.
Akwat ts'a' ch'araahk'ee izhik chan nilįį jyaa dinchy'aa oo'at gwizhit kwankit kak	Whenever anyone killed anything, too, they gave them a little meat and they would

yahaachy'aa aii chan nitł'eeriitrak jyaa gwizhrii chan ree digii'in.	take it home and cook it over the fire, that's all they did.
Akwat ts'a' aii tr'iinin oondaa kwankit kak jyaa dii'in izhik hee nilįį tsal vintł'eerahchak aii daachy'aa, aii a'aa ts'a' gwizhrii.	So that orphan would cook that meat over the fire and eat it, that's all.
Aaa! shitseii! chiitee nąįį neeshraahchy'aa.	Ah! grandchild! the orphans had a hard time.
[Alice asks if she herself raised any orphans.]	
Aaha' chiitee tik nąįį dinky'ałjik. Chiitee k'eerąąhtii łyaa gwihil'ee izhik gwanaa gwinyaa chy'aa.	Yes, I raised three orphans. In those days they said if you took care of orphans it did you good.
Jii shigii ree jii vigii nivee teiindi' aii gwats'at yeedit vigii. Aii gwats'at jyaa dinchy'aa. Jii t'ee shigii ts'a' jii t'ee vigii. Aii jii chan vigii.	This son of mine, his son was in the army [Sam's son Paul], and down there is his son [Snooks]. And that is his son.
Aii nich'it neekwąįį chiitee nilįį chan. Aii shigii vigii aii vigii yeedit chyaatsal aii chan chiitee nilįį aii datthak gintsal gwiizhik. Jenny zhrii ree yeendee Henry aii ree shriit'ąhtsii, akwat oonjit gwizhrii hee gavaa kwarigwinli' aii dink'iginjik tł'ee hee geełee rihiijyaa ts'a' adan aii tr'oonjik t'inchy'aa. Goohan nąįį tthak.	And there were also two orphan girls. My son's son's son, a little boy down there, became an orphan when they were all small. But Jenny and Henry up here were kind of big. We stayed over there with them until they were all raised, and then she got married. Their mother and all.
Deenaadąį' chiitee gwinlį' k'it łąą t'iginchy'aa. Aii nitsii gook'ęęłtii.	They were like orphans a long time ago. Your grandfather took care of them.
Nitsii vee'ii gii nąįį t'inchy'aa ts'a' yaa Gwichyaa duuyee shoondee nąįį eełee hahaii chy'aa giveh'an shoondee nąįį eełee rahaajil ts'a' gook'ęęłtii ch'ihłee zhrii tr'oonjik t'inchy'aa gohch'it ree shigii ch'ihłak zhrii gwanlįį chy'aa vigii kwaii.	There were your grandfather's uncle's children down at Fort Yukon, and though before that we never would leave my older brothers, on their account we left my older brothers and he took care of them, but we only took one of them. I had only one child, and he had some children.
Aaa! shitseii, łyaa gwintsal shriit'ąhkhyuk gwįhdaii.	Ah! grandchild, I have really lived a long time.

Jii ree shigii
jii chan vigii
jii chan vigii
jii juk chan chyaatsal vigii goodlit.
Dǫǫ hee nihzhyaaneedijii naa.
Łyaa zhyaa ninghuk gwįhdaii.

This was my child,
and this was his child,
and then that one had a child,
and that little boy [Snooks] has a kid now.
That is four generations.
I have really lived a long time.

[Alice speaks.]

Shitseii, łyaa ninghuk gwįhdaii k'it t'oonchy'aa.
Dǫǫ nąįį ree.
Jii juk chyaatsal vigii goodlit kwaii haa dǫǫ nihzhyaaneedijii.
Aii chan oodhiijik ji' chan juk ree nich'it tsal k'eekwat hideeghal.

Grandchild, it's like I've really lived a long time.
Four generations.
This little boy had a kid, so that makes it four generations.
If I took that one, I'd have a little girl running around here.

[Alice speaks.]

Deenaadąį' tr'injaa
tr'ikhit ninghuk gwiindaii nyaa vaihnyaa.
Veeriheedyaa gwats'a' gwintł'oo ninghuk gwiindaii gǫǫ ree yiyear aii ree haahtin kwaa.

Long ago there was a woman
who lived a long time, as I said.
Before she got married she had lived a long time, but she didn't count her years.

Aiits'a'
chan veeraadii chan ninghuk veerindi' yahnyaa.
Aiits'a' aii vakąį'
chan vakwaa.
Aii gwats'at chan ninghuk gwiindaii yahnyaa.
Dąąhchy'aa year t'agwahnyaa vaashandaii kwaa roo.
Aii khik nitsii geeginkhii.

And then
after she got married, she was married for a long time, they say.
And then her husband died,
and she lived a long time after that.
I don't know how many years he said it was.
Your grandpa always talked about it.

Akwat ts'a'
gohch'it chan tr'iginkhii gwizhit yeedit eenjik gwiizhik t'agwahnyaa
dǫhłii.
Viti' geeginkhii t'agwahnyaa dǫhłii.
Ndaa ts'a'
nijin vakąį' yindi' izhik khehłan gwizhrii t'inchy'aa yahnyaa.
Kwat ts'a' dakąį' giitł'uu ninghuk gwiindaii
tr'iginkhii zhee gaadha'ąįį gwizhrii ree.

And then
finally he lay dead in the church,
I guess.
His father talked about it, I guess.
From that time
she lived all the time where she was married, he said.
After her husband died, she lived a long time,
just working in the church.

Akwat ts'a' jyahts'a'
shandaa nitsii khik yeeginkhii t'ee.

Aiits'a'
dzaa geełee hihshii kwaa ts'a' ree
tr'iginkhii zhee gaadhii'aii izhik gwik'it
oondaa tr'iginkhii zheh zhyaa khik laraa
haa ree
angwałtsii.
Aii t'ee gaa gwitr'it t'agwał'in k'it
t'ihchy'aa.
Akwat oondaa
zhee gwahtsii dąį'
nik'ehdaa laraa tsal haa
vantł'analzhik.

Akwat ts'a'
shits'i' hijyaa nąįį eenjit chan zhat
gwigwee'in gwatsal gwałtsii ts'a'
nitsii chan
daalaii chan veenjit oodhiijik.
Ginkhii nąįį laraa tee chan one hundred
dollar.
Nineegwaalii
nigwindhat dąį'
chan ginkhii laraa nąįį tee chan
jyaa dishizhik.

Akwat ts'a'
shitseii, izhik
zhyaa nitsii
tr'injaa
tr'iginkhii zhee ndaa naa'ąį' nyaa izhik
gwik'it gwałtsii ts'a' jyaa dishi'in.
Tth'aii hee nihk'it ałdal t'oonchy'aa.

Aaa! shitseii! gwintł'oo
diinlak nąįį khaniljik gwachoo gwitsįį zhyaa
shroonchy'aa tr'eedaa t'oonchy'aa.
Zhyaa diinlak nąįį yeenduk vaagwiindaii
kwaa nąįį zhyaa ree k'iinii zhyaa ree
laraa choo jyaa darah'in aii kwan
zhyaa ree.
Ndaa ts'a' chiitee tr'ilik hee neeshreegwaahchy'aa chy'aa.
Gwintł'oo

Then this is what your grandpa always
said.

So
I don't go away from this place,
this woman always worked in the church,
he said, so I do the same, I always
give money to the church.

It's just like I'm working there.
When he was building that church,
every now and then
I gave him a little money.

And then
I gave something to show for the people
I have left behind; for your grandfather
I got the bell.
I gave them one hundred dollars.

When Easter
came
I always gave the church money too.

And so,
grandchild,
your grandpa
talked about that woman
who practically lived in the church and
died there, and I tried to do the same.
And I am still doing it.

Ah! grandchild, really
our relatives worked hard, but now it's
all just fun.
Our friends out there that we don't even
know send us a lot of money and we
survive on it.

It used to be that we were orphans, poor.
Really

tr’iinin ihłįį
dąį’ ganaldaii kwaa ti’yaa nindhat dąį’ gwanaa gwintł’oo
ni’ęę khahiljik googaa
gwintł’oo neeshreerąąhchy’a’ chy’aa.

Chan dinjii
vagwąąhtł’oo t’adoolnąįį aii chan shits’i’ an ilik chan chiitee neeshilik.

It’ee ree łi’haa neeshreehaałchy’aa yeenduk
nakhwalak nąįį gwinzįį shak’ąąhtii.
Shalak nąįį tthak
gwinzįį shak’ąąhtii gwintł’oo tsee’in nitsii ihłįį.

Yeedak
zhee kak geenjit
neeshraahchy’aa goohideenjyaa gwizhrii geenjit khik ishik’ik t’agwaihnyaa.

when I was a child
I don’t remember when my father died, and then really
my mother worked hard but
we were still poor.

I married
A strong young man and then he died, and I was an orphan again.

I would have been very poor, but my friends outside
take good care of me.
All my relatives
take very good care of me and I am thankful for it.
And I constantly
pray for them
so the poor people will be safe, that’s what I’m talking about.

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21 Rabbit-skin blankets

Belle tells what people used to use for bedding, describing the making of blankets from twined and woven rabbit-skins.

Shitseii łyaa
datthak gineedhaldee gwiizhik ree t'oohnyaa.
Łąą gwintł'oo gogwantrii
t'igwinyaa shitseii.

Grandchild, really
I've forgotten all about that.
It was really hard,
so they say, grandchild.

Aii tr'ookit ganaldaii t'ee gwihsheii gwatsal.

The first time I remember, I remember only a little.

Łąą
zhik
geh dhaa
yaaghat geh dhaa
aii aii chan
vadzaih dhaa chan
aii haa
t'agwąąhchy'aa.

Really
that
rabbit skin,
that rabbit skin
and also
caribou skin
those
were all we used.

Akwat t'ee
dazhoo ts'at tr'ahtsii
aii vik'eevee tthak
tr'antthak, ts'a' vik'eevee tthak
tthak needhi'ee.

And then
we made fur blankets;
there was a fringe around the border,
we made a fringe, and all around it,
a fringe went all around.

Akwat
vadzaih dhaa kheeky'uu
aii ree ditr'uu giyahnyaa akwat
aii ree t'ee chyah ts'a' yeezhee iłtsuu.
Tsuh chan nał'in kwaa
heedai' gwanaa gwats'an tsuh kįįriltin gwanlįį t'oonchy'aa.

And
caribou skins that had lost some hair,
which they called *ditr'uu*,
were put down for mattresses.
I never saw a pillow;
only recently did we start to use pillows.

Akwat ts'a'
geh dhaa
aii
neeradąąht'al ts'a'
jyaa dąhchyaa ts'a'
neeradąąht'al ts'a'
oondaa vindee k'it
gwankeeyiichy'ąh tr'agwahtsik.

And
the rabbit skin,
that
we cut around and around it and
made it about so wide and
as we cut around it in circles,
where the eye hole is
we made it a little wider.

Aii oo'ok chik geedzaarąąhtsuu ts'a'
tr'andoo ts'a'
gwiizhik chan ch'ihłak
chan
ch'itły'aa ch'irįįłt'uu ts'a' nihtsįį neeranlik
gał jyaa dąąhchy'aa aii
haa nahodoo ts'ik jyaa darah'in.
Jeiinch'ii choo kii gahtsik jyaa dąąhchy'aa giyahtsii dǫhłii.

It'ee geh ts'at tr'ihitł'uk.
Nihts'eegiihiitł'uk
gohch'it zhyaa
vizhit neekwąįį nihtsii gehdaa rahtsik łii.

Aii t'ee ditr'uu chyah ch'aa yeezhee ah kak
iłtsuu
aii kak tseegąąhzhii izhik gwak'aa
giizhit iłchųų.

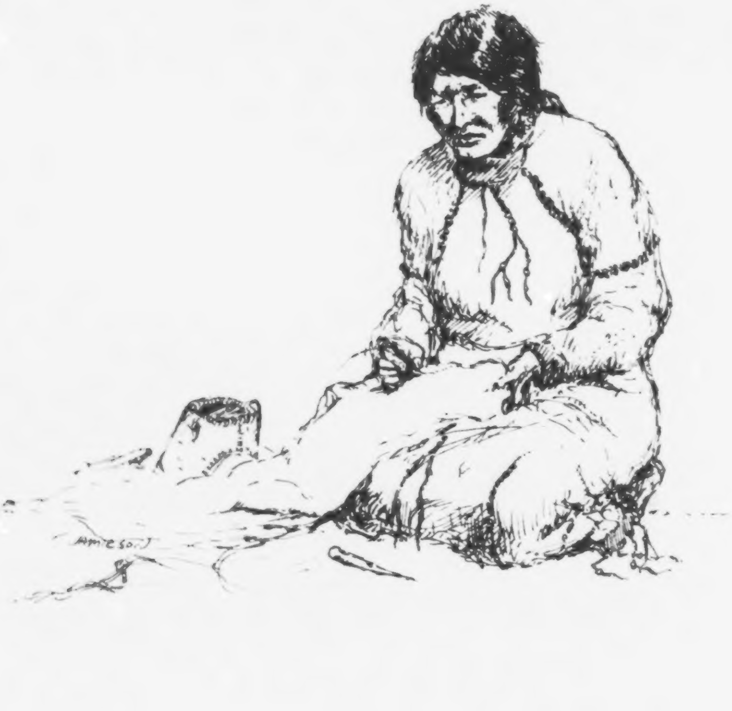
We hung it up outside and
twisted it and
took another one
also
and wove them together, one after the other,
and took so many around a stick
and made them thin with that.

They made a big roll like this, about this big, I think.

Then we started weaving a rabbit blanket.

They started weaving it back and forth,
and finally
we had two of them made.

That ragged blanket was put on top of spruce boughs
and
they got all wrapped up in blankets on top of that
and slept in it.



22 Family history

The exact location of Chihshoo has not been determined. After Belle's father died, his widow and children became attached to his relatives as part of their band or extended family. Belle tells more about Ch'eeghwałti', who died at Fort Yukon while she and her mother were there. Apparently Belle's mother tried to provide for her children by giving them in adoption, but Belle and her younger brother were so unhappy to be parted from their family that their mother took them back. Belle tells how her mother traveled around with various relatives, eking out a living for her children as best she could, with the help of wealthier people. Finally Belle's mother was able to get a husband for her daughter, thus once again providing her family with a hunter. In pre-European times, a widow often married her late husband's brother.

Akwat gwiizhik shriit'ąhtsii ts'a' tr'ijit ree oo'at traa nihdeeraadal aii giriizhaa.	During that time we were big enough to go out for firewood and we worked hard at it.
Ni'ęę tr'ijit vits'irinyaa gaa drin hee hiljii ts'a' gwizhrii, it'ee gyah ts'a' jyahts'a' gwizhrii.	We always helped my mother, for she was gone all day to her rabbit snares, that's all she did.
Aiits'a' kheegwadadhaak'a' t'ee giidhan roo.	But we were able to keep the fire going!
Aiits'a' zhyaa zhee gwizhit khehłak gwizhrii tseerąązhii chan diints'įį tr'igwich'ii kwaa ts'a'.	And so we just stayed in one house by ourselves; we didn't have anyone living across from us.
Aaa! shitseii gwintł'oo shih kwaa.	Ah! grandchild, there was no food.
Akwat shitsuu nąįį it'ee aanaii diigahnyaa googaa gook'eeragwahthat kwaa.	Then our older women relatives told us to come over but we didn't do it.
Diinzhee gwizhit gwizhrii tseerąązhii.	We just stayed in our own house.
Juunchy'aa gohch'it ndaa ts'a' łąįį neekwąįį haa shachaa shats'aii haa zhrii oo'ok traa tsal yeetthan ree aii vak'ach'iihtthal aii dachąąval chan nats'aa gwik'iighai' dee tr'ijit oo'ęę neiiluu li'.	That's how it was, and finally I took out two dogs with my younger brother, to get a little firewood in the woods a ways from the house, and I chopped it and loaded the sled, and I wonder how I ever managed to drag it all the way home?

Aii jyaa deii'in ts'a' gwiizhik ni'ęę gyah ts'a' hiljii.	While I was doing that, my mother was out checking the snares.
Geh oo'ęę naazhik aii kwan zhyaa ree ndaa nikhweelyaa gwiizhik shitsuu nąįį chan diik'eegąąhtii.	She brought rabbits home and we lived on that, and my older women relatives took care of us too.
Aii shitsii gaa tth'aii gwandaii roo, Gwats'arikhyaa.	My grandfather was even still alive then, Gwats'arikhyaa.
Aiits'a' shitsuu ti'yąą veejii aii ree shitsii googaa ęhdaa gwiindaii t'arahnyaa roo.	And also my old aunt, my father's older sister, lived longer than my grandfather, they say!
Łyaa ninghuk shitsuu gwandaii.	And this woman, my grandma, lived a very long time.
Łyaa zhyaa gwinzii diik'eegąąhtii ts'a' shitseii gohch'it it'ee shriit'arąhtsii ts'a' yeendit gwa'an ch'aragwąh'ąįį ginyaa Circle.	And she really took good care of us, grandchild, and finally, when we were nearly grown, downriver around there at Circle, they said they struck gold.
Gee'eenjit ddhaa k'iinii nin'ee izhik hee t'igwii'in t'iginyaa.	They did that, so they said, in the mountains right above that place.
Aiits'a' yaa deetthan izhik gwa'an chan kha'in'ee chan gagahnyaa Circle gęhjit.	And up the slope there also is a place called Kha'in'ee above Circle.
Izhik gwa'an hee t'ee gwigwigwiiłkįį t'agoorahnyaa.	That's where they staked their claims.
Akhai' gaanatąąhąįį ts'a' izhik chan gwak'at shee'ii chan Maggie viti' gwinyaa aii t'ee ni'ęę voondee t'arahnyaa. Aii Maggie viti' vahan ni'ęę haa khehłak ti' gii'įį gooti' ch'ihłak ginlįį.	But it flooded over; then my mother's brother, Maggie's father, was there, so they said; now he was my mother's older brother. And Maggie's father's mother and my mother had the same father, their father was the same.
Aiits'a' aii William Pilot ginyaa chan vachaa t'inchy'aa.	And so that William Pilot they say is also her younger brother.
Aiits'a' aii chan veejii *[Personal name inaudible]* vahan haa khehłak ti' gii'įį roo.	And that one's older sister, too, and [?'s] mother have the same father!
Akwat ts'a' aii shee'ii Maggie viti' William Pilot haa ni'ęę voondee vachaa haa ginlįį.	So then that uncle of mine, Maggie's father, and William Pilot are my mother's older and younger brothers

Akwat izhik chan ch'at'aroohchy'a' izhik chan akwat t'ee shee'ii vit'irihiiłchy'a' gǫǫ tr'ihchoo it'ee goodlit.	Then they should have been with us there; at that time there my mother's brother was going to be with us but then the boat started coming.
It'ee izhik t'ee it'ee tr'ihchoo goodlit.	That's when the boat started coming.
Googaa duuyee k'eiich'ii tr'ąąh'in.	Even so, we didn't see any trade goods.
Nats'ahts'a' gwik'iighai' k'eiich'ii tr'ahąąh'yaa gǫǫ?	How would we see any of those things?
Oonjit nijin laraa aragwąh'ąįį izhik gwizhrii geenjit vaagwitr'it t'aragwah'in eenjit gii'įį akwat nats'aa.	Up there where they struck gold was the only place they had those things, because they were working.
Aaa! shitseii ninghuk gwahaadhat tł'ee k'eiich'ii goodlit t'oonchy'aa.	Ah! grandchild, it was a long time before trade goods started coming in.
It'ee łyaa dink'ihkhit nigwiighit aii gwiizhik ree łąą aii Circle ch'aragwąh'ąįį.	Then when I was almost grown, that was the time during which they really struck gold at Circle.
Aii shin gwiindhat ts'a' chan khaii neegweedhat.	That summer passed and winter came again.
Aiitł'ee chan shin neegwiidhat izhik it'ee at'oohju' hee t'ee vaanoodlit, aii chan yaaghok gwiheechy'aa kwaa tr'ihchoo zhit gwizhrii.	After that another summer came and then at last a white man came, but he didn't stay here, he just came through in a boat.
Akwat ts'a' izhik t'ee aiitł'ee aii ch'aragwąh'ąįį gwinyaa tr'ihchoo goodlit. Tth'aii tr'ihchoo gwiheelyaa gwats'a' hee izhik t'ee Ch'aadzahti', tr'iiłk'ee gwinyaa t'oonchy'aa.	Then at that time, after that, they said they struck gold, and the boat started coming. When the boat had not yet come was when they said somebody shot Ch'aadzahti'.
Akwat ts'a' izhik it'ee khik gach'arąh'įį.	That marks the time when they struck gold.

Aii izhik tł'ee neegwilgǫ' khaii neegwiidhat
neegwilgǫ'.
June nan gwiizhik t'ee tr'injaa
dhiilit.

Aii t'ąhthee hee.

Tth'aii hee łąą dinjii zhuh tee gwintł'oo k'eiich'ii gwanlįį
kwaa gwiizhik hee ree tr'injaa dhiidlit t'oonchy'aa.

Aii tr'injaa tth'aii hihłyaa
gwats'a'
dinjii
sheenjit oonjik ni'ęę.

Aiits'a'
doondee haa t'inchy'aa ts'a' shant'ee yeeduk ni'ęę
fish camp hee shaa
tseegąąhshii izhik hee gwizhrii t'irinchy'aa.

Akwat Gwichyaa Zhee gaariindaii kwaa roo.
Dinjii kwaa neegwaadhak akwat juu
duuyee łineeraadal
chy'aa zhyaa ree.

Deenaadąį' dinjii nąįį zhrii ree
tr'igwitil ginyaa gwik'it geenjit kwaiik'it gogwah'įį gwinyaa, izhik ree yeedit ree zhyaa juk
kwaiik'it gwintsii nagwaatth'at.

Jyaa doonchy'aa t'oonchy'aa
łyaa ninghit.

Akwat niti' t'ee izhik
tr'injaa dhiilit jihnyaa
gwats'a' shin
izhik t'ee shireeghwaa nyaa gǫǫ
niti'
ninghit gwanaa geegwaldak t'iihnyaa.

Akwat ts'a' shitseii ganaldaii kwaa ts'a' shoaahkat k'iighai' ree gwaldak t'iihnyaa roo.

Łyaa oihts'it ji' gitr'ii'ee googaa ree.

Łyaa zhyaa khaiits'a'
hee ree izhik ree ni'ęę sheenjit yunjik łii.

After that, spring came; winter passed
and spring came.
And that June I became
a woman.

That long ago.

There were no trade goods among the Natives yet
at the time when I became a woman.

I was still not a woman
when
she got a man
for me, my mother.

Then
he stayed with his older brother and I stayed down with my mother
at fish camp,
and that's all we did during that time.

Now we didn't even know about Ft. Yukon.

People didn't gather there at that time;
they couldn't assemble
in the old days, you see.

Long ago the people only
held feasts there, they say, and that was what they had that village for, but today that place down there
has become a big town.

That was the way it was
really long ago.

Well, your father once said
that during that summer
before I became a woman,
someone was packing him around;
that was your father
I'm talking about, a long time ago.

Well, grandchild, I didn't remember it, and then you asked me, so now I'm telling it!

I really wouldn't like to tell a lie, you know.

In early fall
was when my mother got a man for me.

Akwat ts'a'
khaii gwiindhat
akwat tł'ee chan shin gwiindhat.

Shitseii
jii khaii gwiindhat ts'a'
neegwilgǫ' ts'a'
izhik khaii t'ee khaiits'a' dinjii sheenjit oonjik.

Izhik
doondee haa t'inchy'aa.

Aiits'a'
khaii tthak gwiindhat ts'a' neegwilgǫ'
June nan t'ee tr'injaa dhiidlit t'oonchy'aa.

Jii
gwats'a'
khaii ch'ihłak
gwiindhat ts'a' dąįį t'ee tr'injaa dhiidlit roo.

Izhik zhat it'ee veesharąhchįį gǫǫ.

Tr'iginkhii zhee nirijyaa
gwak'at deedhishizhii ts'a' ookit tł'eedik zheegwadhaa gwanah'ee.
Aii gwiizhik ree
teedhakwąįį ts'a' zhyaa akǫǫ
łąą t'ee gwikįį shaa dhidii kwaa ts'a' nał'in chan kwaa gwiizhik zhyaa it'ee zhyaa vats'an shiriłtsąįį t'inchy'aa nahąą.

Aaa! shitseii
akwat ts'a'
it'ee chan hee ree doondee ts'eehoozhii łii.

Shitseii
gwintł'oo doondee eet'iindhan t'inchy'aa.

Yeendit, yee'at gwizh'in K'aiiroondak izhik voondee t'inchy'aa, aii chan goonjik.

Akwat ts'a' vigii goodlit tł'ee hee chan hee tr'iinin neegii'įį tł'ee hee
gohju' hee at'oohju' hee t'ee
shoonjik t'inchy'aa.

Tr'ookit tr'iinin goodlit
gwats'at tr'iinin goodlit
gwiizhik at'oohju' hee t'ee
ni'ęę yats'an shiłtsąįį.

And that
winter passed
and the next summer passed.

Grandchild,
this winter passed and
it thawed and
that winter, that fall she got a man for me.

Then
he was living with his brother.

And then
the whole winter passed and it thawed,
and in June I became a woman.

Before this
time
one winter
passed and in spring I became a woman.

That's when they married us.

We all went to church,
and when I came back out, he had a tent set up down on the shore.

Meanwhile,
he landed in a canoe and even though
he had never stayed with me, and I had never seen him before, they just went ahead and gave me to him, you see.

Ah! grandchild,
and then
he went back home to his older brother.

Grandchild,
he liked his older brother very much.

His older brother was staying over at Shuman House and he got married too.

And then after his son was born, and another child, then
finally that was when
my husband married me.

The first child was born,
and then the next child was born,
and then finally
my mother married me to him.

Ni'ęę gwileii khaniljik datthak chan ree gwinzii ch'at'aahchy'a' ree gwiltsaii.	My poor mother worked hard at this, to make everything easier for herself.
Aaa! shitseii gwintł'oo kwat t'ee yeenji' gwich'in t'inchy'aa akwat ree vaashandaii kwaa ts'a' nał'in kwaa ree ts'a' vats'an eeshiriintrat.	Ah, grandchild, he really lived far upriver, so that I didn't know him, hadn't even seen him, when they gave me to him.
Nih'an hee ree nihts'a' k'eegwaadhat tł'ee hee t'ee gohch'it hee t'ee nihłaa niriin'oo roo.	We didn't live together for a long time, and then we finally got together!
Aaa! shitseii vaanoodlit chan haashandaii kwaa. Nihky'aa kwaiik'it goodlii chan gaashandaii kwaa.	Ah! grandchild, I didn't even know about white men. I didn't even know about other villages.
Aiits'a' dzaa gwizhrii Chalkyiitsik gwizhrii dink'iidhat t'oonchy'aa.	That is, here in Chalkyitsik is the only place I was raised.
Yeendee Chihshoo garahnyaa izhik shigwinli' akwat ts'a' dzaa dzaa gwizhrii dink'iidhat, nihky'aa kwaiik'it duuyee gaashandaii.	Up country at the place they call Chihshoo I was born, and then I was just raised here, so I had no way of knowing about other villages.
Ti'yąą chan Gwichyaa niindhat t'inchy'aa.	My father died in Ft. Yukon.
Ti'yąą ganaldaii kwaa dąį' niindhat googaa vanaldaii kwaa t'oonchy'aa.	I didn't know my father when he died, I don't even remember him.
Akwat ts'a' ni'ęę aiits'a' dzaa shitii nąįį ti'yąą vats'aii.	Well then, my mother and my father's brothers stayed around here.
Izhik dąį' kheezhii gwinyaa nahąą.	In those days they called them Kheezhii, you see.
Aiits'a' ooduk shee'ii nąįį gwanlįį ni'ęę valak nąįį gwanlįį googaa dzaa ti'yąą valak nąįį tee ts'a'.	And south of here were my mother's brothers, and my mother's relatives, but my father's relatives were all around here.
Neegiihił'e' izhik gwits'ee nakhwahaadlii izhik gwizhrii t'iihchy'aa.	They sent us back from there to this place, and so I just stayed here.
Gwats'a' Rikhyaa varahnyaa vizhyaa vigii nąįį dǫǫ gwinli'.	The one they called Gwats'a' Rikhyaa, he had four children.

Aii
nąįį datthak dzaa t'iginchy'aa.

Akwat
nihky'aa gwich'in nąįį gwanlįį kwaa ts'a' t'irinchy'aa t'aragwahnyaa, zhyaa khehtak nihtee neegihiidal gwizhrii.
Akwat khehłan kwaiik'it gwits'eerihiidal kwaa ts'a'
nijin gwaragoodlii gwizhrii t'oonchy'aa t'igwinyaa.

Akwat
shitseii łyaa dinjii gwanlįį roo.
Duuyee goonaldaii.

Akwat ts'a'
aaa! shitseii zhyaa geeneegwaldak googaa gitr'ii'ee goo ree gwats'a' shǫǫhkak roo.

Aaa! shitseii, joonchy'aa
niivyaa chan ghat jyaa doonchy'aa
zhik k'iidak chan dachan kwaii haa'ee ts'a' oo'at nihdee gwiidįį izhik chan dazhoo ch'aa gihdeenvyaa.

Akwat yehdee gwankeeyiichy'a' gwachoo roo.
Datthak ah daadlii tanh kak zhyaa
zhik juu niht'aahchy'aa jyaa doonchy'aa
ditr'ii chyaa iłtsuu kak ree deetsiniichii gwizhrii ree.

Akwat zhik gwa'an chuntyąh, tyąą haa
duuyee.

Aaa! shitseii, gwintł'oo
geegirinkhii googaa neeshreegwaahchy'aa.

It'eełi' neeshreegwaahchy'aa ts'a'
geetak hee oo'ok neeshraahchy'aa nąįį neegwahaahky'aa kǫ' kwaa gwich'in.

Aiits'a' oo'ok neegwaahk'ik aii ts'an oondaa traa daak'a' łoąąhdak aii
yintł'eechik ts'a' aii haa oo'at kheeneegwahaaky'aa eenjit.

Jyaa dagwąhtsii t'ee neeshreegwaahchy'aa geegwaldak t'iihnyaa.

All those
people were living here.

Then
there were no people from other villages; we stayed here, and only the men traveled from place to place.

But we didn't travel from village to village,
we just made our own settlement wherever we happened to be.

Then,
grandchild, there were quite a few people;
I just can't remember.

Well,
ah! grandchild, I just keep on telling about them even though I don't want to, since you guys keep asking me!

Ah! grandchild, the way it was,
the bottom of the skin tent was this way,
and poles stuck straight up that way, and there was a flap of skin over the entrance

And up at the top was a big hole.

Cold spruce boughs were all over the floor,
and whatever married couple lived there
sat there on old skin mattresses with the hair worn off, that's all.

And there was no cup, or pot
at all.

Ah! grandchild,
we're talking a lot about it, even though it was very hard times.

Times were so hard that
some of the poor people out in the bush didn't even have matches, I guess.

And so they would get a piece of burning wood from whoever had a fire
and take it home to start their own fire.

That's how hard the times were that I'm telling about, I mean it.

Shitii ginkhii vaanandaii aii vachaa chan Nahtryah John varahnyaa.	My father's brother, you know, the preacher, had a younger brother called Nahtryah John.
Stephen Choo nik'ee vanandaii, aii vahan chan yaaghat Ben vahan aii it'ee ti'yąą veejii Loola vahan aii vitii ree.	And you know Stephen Choo, his mother, was Ben's mother and my father's older sister, and he was Loola's mother's paternal uncle.
Aii nąįį googii nąįį gwanlįį.	They had a lot of children.
Akwat ts'a' yaa shitii Henry Gwatsoo chan aii Vats'a' Gehtr'ooti'.	And then my father's brother Henry Gwatsoo also, that one Vats'a' Gehtr'oo's father.
Akwat ts'a' aii shitsuu nąįį tthak giveeriilk'įį shitii nąįį chan geegiilk'įį geegįįhshii.	Well, all the women of my grandmother's generation were married, and also all my father's brothers; that's what I'm talking about.
Akwat ts'a' shitsuu nąįį aii Loola vahan tth'aii vakąį' vaagwandaii gwiyehkįį gwats'an ihłįį t'iihnyaa.	Well then, as for my great-aunts, the one who was Loola's mother was still living with her husband at the time I was born, as I mentioned.
Aii chan shandaa vakwaa yeendee Teetsik.	She died when I was there up at Teetsik.
Akwat shitseii akwat zhyaa łyaa zhyaa dinjii lęįį yaagha' sheek'aii Eliza nąįį khehłaa nąįį tthak chan ree dzaa t'iginchy'aa.	Well, grandchild, there were really a lot of people; my aunt Eliza's family all lived here too together.
Akwat t'ee dzaa jyaa doonchy'aa zhyaa gohch'it ree Shahnyaati' gwinyaa aii aii t'ee tth'aii gwandaii hee nał'yą' chan.	So then, that's how it was here, and finally I saw the famous Shahnyaati' who was still living at that time.
Aiitł'ee vijuu gwanaa it'ee shagwąąhtł'oo nigweedhaa gwiizhik it'ee vakwaa aii Shahnyaati'.	A few years later when I was bigger, during that time then he died, that Shahnyaati'.
Yeenaadąį' yeenji' nahkak Cheeghwałti' gwinyaa.	Long ago they say Ch'eeghwałti' was in the upriver country.

Aii aii googaa chan nał'yą'.	Even him I saw, too.
Aii t'ee shįį t'ee shuu hadoii'ąįį Gwichyaa Zhee teerilchįį hee.	I was the one who watched over his deathbed when they brought him to Ft. Yukon.
Aii t'ąhthee gwats'an khagwitr'it t'agwahool'ya'.	It was that long ago that I started working for myself.
Khwąh haa oonjit Circle t'ihchy'aa gwiizhik teerilchįį łii.	When I was living up at Circle, some people brought him down on a raft.
Ijii shitseii zhyaa oonjit hee gwats'at khwąą haa googaa neerihiidal ts'a' oo'at zhee geh'at Deets'at K'ǫǫ gwit'iinląįį izhik t'ee teekhwah'ol goozhii t'oonchy'aa oonjuk Old Crow gwats'at hee khwąą haa t'igii'in.	Why, grandchild, all that way down the river with a raft they traveled there, floating their raft to the mouth of the Sucker River; they rafted there from far up at Old Crow, they just did it with a raft.
Shitseii, tsingwąąhchy'aa geegįįhshii t'iihnyaa.	Grandchild, it is a really remarkable thing I'm telling about.
Geetak hee ch'adhaa tr'ihchoo ree gahtsii, ch'adhaa tr'ihchoo ree aii łangiidąąhkąį' ts'a' ch'ik'eh dat'an haa chan giizhit ts'ąįį hee ch'ik'eh tthah deek'it łantr'adąąhkąį' tthah deek'it ch'ik'eh haa t'igiyah'in. Aii haa chan łigiidaa.	Sometimes they made skin boats, skin boats, you know; they sewed it together and with sticky fat they caulked the openings along the seams, they did it with fat. And with that they traveled.
Kwat łąą oonjuk googaa tr'ih tr'ahtsii ts'a' gaashandaii kwaa łąą ree tr'ih tr'ohtsyaa ts'a' t'oonchy'aa kwaa łii roo.	But really, I don't know if they even made canoes up river; why, they didn't really need canoes.
Zhyaa ddhah kak gwizhrii gwanlįį akǫǫ nats'aa?	There are nothing but mountains there, so why would they?
Aaa! shitseii, gwintł'oo akwat duuyee łigiidaa.	Ah! grandchild, then it was really impossible to travel around.
Dzaa gwee'an gwich'in nąįį tr'ih gahtsik.	The people living around here always made canoes.
It'ee tr'ih dąįį gahtsik ts'a' gwitł'ee khaiits'a' neegwiheek'al gwats'a' gahadal.	Then in early spring they would make canoes and after that until fall they would travel around by canoe.

Akwat ts'a' neegwiik'al ts'a' it'ee gwitł'ee gwahahgǫ' gwats'a' tthak chan geenjyaa.

Joe Khariidzee gwinyaa duuyee
gaanandaii
Circle Esias
aii vanandaii kwaa.

Aiits'a'
oodit t'ee vigii
Stanley Esias
vaanandaii
aii gooti' it'ee sheek'aii eedhidii.

Aii
ni'ęę aii zhyaa oo'an yuahshįį.

Aii sheek'aii t'ee khaii gavaa tr'injii aiits'a' oodee van juu hee ree.

Aaa! it'ee ti'yąą khaiits'a' niindhat
akwat ts'a' it'ee shin ts'a' t'ee dzaa gwits'ee it'ee ni'ęę dzaa gwits'ee
diihaadlii.

Shachaa nąįį łyaa gootee gwintsal roo.

Izhik t'ee ginkhii Loola vintł'eesharąhchįį łii.

They canoed around, and then after that they traveled around on foot until the thaw.

They talk about Joe Khariidzee—
you wouldn't know them—
and Esias from Circle—
you wouldn't know him either.

Well then,
his son down there,
Stanley Esias—
you know him—
his father [Esias] was married to my mother's sister.

So
my mother was just a distant relative to him.

We stayed with that aunt of mine all winter up at the place they call Van Juu.

Ah! my father had died that fall,
and then at the beginning of summer my mother took us back to here.

My younger brother was very small at that time.

That's when they gave me to the preacher Loola.

It'ee dzaa shin kheediiraadlii khaiits'a' ts'a' it'ee yi'eenji' yeenjit Old Crow juhts'ąįį k'i'eenji' gohch'it oonjuk Ch'oonjik gwitł'it hee t'ee diinagwąąhgǫ' dǫhłii.	Then that summer people brought us back here and in the fall we went far upriver, way up past Old Crow, and finally up in the hills at the headwaters of the Porcupine, the thaw came upon us, I think.
Aaa! shitseii it'ee chan ch'adhaa tr'ihchoo zhuh ji' tr'eenjyaa dinjik gaahkhwąįį aii dhaa teegogwąhjii łii roo.	Ah! grandchild, then we traveled in a skin boat; they killed moose and saved the skins for that!
Ts'a' oonjuk gwitł'it hee ch'adhaa tr'ihchoo ginghan.	And way up at the headwaters they made skin boats.
Akwat ts'a' it'ee nihts'ineeriijil.	And then we started back downriver.
Yaa Old Crow gǫhjit Tł'oo K'at gagahnyaa. Gwintł'oo dinjii gwanlįį teeraajil.	Now up at Old Crow there's a place they call Tł'oo K'at. There were a lot of people there when we arrived.
Aiits'a' zhik tthak zhyaa ree zhee goghoo zhyaa drah gwintł'oo shih lęįį tr'aahkhwąįį łii.	And that place was entirely covered with round houses and caches, and it seemed they had killed a lot of game.
Vadzaih ninindii zhyaa izhik t'inchy'aa łii.	The caribou were migrating at that place, so it happened.
Akwat ts'a' it'ee ni'ęę gwileii vintł'eech'arachak aii kwan danaa zhat ch'ihłęę t'iginchy'aa gwidi' adaa nąįį.	And so then they gave food to my poor mother, and they also provided for all our band.
Akwat ts'a' geedan t'ee chan shih ch'ookwat zhee goo'ąįį. Łii Kheetsik izhik it'ee vadzaih thąį' khwaii ch'ik'eh ch'igii dhah, ch'adhaa inghii aii tthak tr'ookwat t'igwinyaa.	In those days there was also a store selling food there at Kheetsik. There they bought caribou meat, grease, fat, and caribou calf skins, and tanned skins, all those things, they said.
Aii t'ee nji' ts'a' Englis nahkak ts'ąįį giihilii ree.	Back in those days they took those things back up into Canada.

Akwat ts'a' zhat it'ee
neegwiheek'al gwats'a' jyaa dirinchy'aa izhik t'ee gwiizhik shoondee tth'aii diihaa dhidii.

Aiits'a'
dineełee hahaii kwaa.
Shoondee Erick aii ginkhii
Loola Englis ginkhii nilįį
aii haa gwich'ii.
Aiits'a' shoondee kit aii diihaa t'inchy'aa ts'a'
akhai' shoondee dakwai' dhatthaa łii
aiits'a' ehdit nilįį gwiizhik t'ee neegwiik'ii roo.
Aiits'a' konh
zhyaa konh choo ree zhee gwa'at dha'ąįį ree khik.
Izhik ree khehkwaii
nihdeediiriheelyaa gwiłtsąįį.

Izhik
it'ee chiitee lęįį tr'inlįį ts'a' ni'ęę
khadanoaahdii aiits'a'
jyaa didiniinlik aii konh zhit t'irinchy'aa ree.
It'ee gwik'iighai' chan
it'ee khaii shreenyaa gwandaa
it'ee gwee'an shitii nąįį it'ee goondii chan gwits'eerahoojil.
It'ee ti'yąą niindhat gwats'an gweedhaa nahąą geegwaldak t'iihnyaa.

Akwat ts'a'
dzaa chan gwak'at deeneeriijil kwaa ts'a' yee'at K'aiiroondak ree, shitii nąįį t'iginchy'aa izhik ree chan izhik it'ee
nineeraanąįį.
Akwat ts'a' t'ee ndak ts'a' chan neets'aii nahkak chan.
Jyaa dishi'in ts'a' ni'ęę tąįį hee łąįį neekwąįį zhrii haa googaa ni'ęę tąįį giinjii kwaa ts'a'
tąįį hee neediihaazhik.

So then
we stayed at that place until freeze-up, and my older brother was still staying with us then.

And
he didn't leave us.
My older brother Erick
lived with the preacher
Loola, who was a Canadian preacher.
And my eldest brother was staying with us and
he cut his foot with an axe,
so that he had to stay home while fall was approaching.
And there was a sod house,
just a big sod house there all the time.

The chief there
gave us that place to live.

At that time
we were poor orphans, so my mother
did what she could for us, and
he helped us, and we lived in the sod house.
That was the reason
that after the winter and spring
we came back here to be with my father's brothers.
You see, I'm telling about what happened from the time my father died.

And then
we didn't stop here, but went on to Shuman House, where my uncles were living, and there
we joined them.
Then we went up north to Neets'aii country too.
That's what we did, and my mother followed after them with only two dogs, even though my mother didn't know the trail, still
she took us everywhere they went.

Akwat izhik it'ee Łindee'aahti' gwinyaa gwiintth'ak
aii it'ee ree ni'ęę shee'ii yahnyaa.

Aii t'ee yeendak vagwaandaii.

Akhai' t'ee Neets'it Gwich'in nąįį
haa nikheegiindii.

Aii ree nihłaa t'igeechy'aa tł'ee t'ee ree
nihky'aa
neerihiijyaa ree shachaa zhik
ni'ęę shee'ii yahnyaa naihnyaa aii natł'ąhchįį.

Akhai' nihkheełeerahoondii ts'a' shachaa gwintł'oo tree łii
aiits'a' ree shitii oonaa yaa ni'ęę vatąįį yaa nineehozhii, chan ni'ęę nitł'eeneeyąhchįį.

Akwat ts'a'
t'ee ree gweedhaa chan hee
shitii haa gwits'eegohojil izhik chan aii shitii nąįį giveełee
diirihilii kwaa.

Well, then, you've heard of Łindee'aahti';
at that time my mother called him 'my mother's brother'.

He lived way up north [Arctic Village].

And then the Neets'it Gwich'in
all assembled together.

After they all dwelt together for a while,
we parted
and traveled away, and my mother
gave my younger brother to the man I mentioned, that she called 'uncle'.

And as we were departing, my younger brother cried a lot,
and so my father's brother came after my mother with him and gave him back to my mother.

And so
for some time after that
we came back home with my father's brother and after that
we never parted from them.

23 Some notable people; the coming of Christianity

Belle tells more about Ch'eeghwałti', whom she helped to nurse during his last illness. Like his son Roderick, Ch'eeghwałti' was a well known medicine man. Belle then tells a little about William Loola, a Gwich'in lay preacher trained by Archdeacon McDonald. William Loola died in 1916; his son Esaias Loola was for many years a leader at Fort Yukon and was the foster father of Katherine Peter, who worked on this book. William Loola was Belle's father's sister's son. The religious books Belle mentions can be identified from her descriptions. The combined hymnbook and prayer book was McDonald's first printed book in the Dagoo (Canadian) dialect of Gwich'in, published in 1873. The "big Bible" was published in 1898 and included all the translations of various books of the Bible that had previously been issued in separate editions. Even though these books were in a different regional dialect of their language and in a writing system that only partly represented the sounds of their language, many Alaskan Gwich'in people learned to read them well and developed a tradition of literacy based on them. Belle stresses how important hymn-singing (in Gwich'in) was in older times.

Rodrick nik'ee vaanandaii.
Aii viti' t'ee Ch'eeghwałti' oozhii t'inchy'aa.

Zhik tr'iikak googaa neehidik
  giyahnyaa roo,
k'eejit nilįį dąį'.
Yee'at nich'it
viti'
Peter
aii Peter viti'
vijuu
aii haa shįį haa
vik'eeriiłtii.
Ch'eeghwałti' dazhan choo nilįį gwinyaa
  chy'aa tr'iijii yik'eełtįį.
Aii vigii nąįį tthak zhyaa ree gaatsii
  yeendit
Old Crow chan.
Gwintł'oo vehdaa
dinjii lęįį vats'an gwandaii t'inchy'aa roo.
  It'ee Roderick viti' Ch'eeghwałti'.

Akwat ts'a'
izhik
it'ee iłts'ik gwiizhik nał'in
zhat teeriłchįį roo.

You know Roderick.
His father's name was Ch'eeghwałti'.

They say his father was still walking
  around
when Roderick was a young man.
That girl over there's
father
was Peter
and Peter's father's
younger sister,
well, she and I
took care of him.
Ch'eeghwałti' was a big medicine man,
  they used to say, but there was no one
  to take care of him.
There were many of his children upriver
and at Old Crow.
He has many
descendants living today! That is,
  Roderick's father Ch'eeghwałti'.

So then,
at the time
when he was sick, I saw him
when they brought him down here by boat.

Akwat it'ee gwats'an vik'eehanołti'	From then on I started taking care of him,
vakwaa ts'a' gwizhrii gwikii nał'in kwaa.	until he died; I had never seen him before.
Yeenji' gwich'in t'inchy'aa nats'aa.	He lived way up river, that's why.
Jyaa	So
it'ee gwizhrii nał'yą' t'inchy'aa.	that was the only time I ever saw him.
Akwat ts'a' veegoldak ts'a' t'oonchy'aa kwaa.	So I have nothing to tell about him.
Shuuhadoii'ąįį gwizhrii ree.	I watched over his deathbed, that's all.
Akwat ts'a' yee'at	Well now, over there
Rodrick vigii ree Mae oozhii.	was Roderick's child named Mae.
Ch'ihłee chan Laura oozhii.	Another was named Laura.
Aii vaanoodlit ch'ihłee chan	And there was one white man
Schafer oozhii.	named Schafer.
Aii Schafer t'ee Laura oonjik.	And that Schafer married Laura.
Aiits'a' Margaret	After that Margaret
vagoodlit *[personal name, inaudible]* vahan.	was born, *[inaudible]'s* mother.
Akwat ts'a' jii Mae	And then this Mae
oodit	had a son,
Richard Martin	Richard Martin,
aii	that one,
akwat ts'a' jii Margaret vigii seven łii roo.	and that Margaret had seven children!
Vigii seven gwanlįį tthak tsyaa ginlįį.	There were seven children, and they were all boys.
Ts'a' jii	And those
ants'a' googii neegwiheelyaa dǫhłii łyaa	others will have a lot of children too, I'll bet, they really
googwiheelyaa gwich'in.	will be many, I think.
Yęhjit Old Crow chan ree.	Up there at Old Crow too.
Aii Old Crow ree vigii ch'ihłak tr'injaa nąįį gwandaii chy'aa	One of their children, a woman, used to live up at Old Crow,
aii chan vakwaa. Akwat viyeets'i' ree gwandaii gwinyaa.	but she died. I hear her daughter is still living.
Ants'a'	The old man
akwat łąą gwintł'oo ch'adan kwaiik'it gwats'an t'inchy'aa	was from a far-away village,
nats'aa it'ee hahchyaa gwizhrii vik'eehaałtyaa goo'ąįį.	and that was the only time I took care of him, so that's all I know.
Yeedak ts'ąįį gwizhrii geeginkhii giyahnyaa.	They say he only talked about heaven.

Aiits'a' dzaa zhyaa dinjii vaghaih dak a'ee dlok haa zhyaa dineegach'ahantii t'arahnyaa
gwik'it t'iizhik akhai' gwiizhik vizhii k'igwaanąįį zhyaa
tr'iikak zhyaa
neech'igihijik.

Tr'injaa nąįį chan
dinjii iłtsik chan
ts'a' tr'injii gaa.

Shitseii, łi'haa dinjii vah di'įį ree łąą
vaa tehk'aa t'ishi'yaa kwaa yahnyaa
shaagwaandak.

Ti'yąą zhrii hanjii zhyaa
ree viti' vik'ii gwiłtsąįį dǫhłii.
Googaa ree
hanjii zhrii ree nyaa.

Googaa vaa
tehk'aa t'ishi'ya' kwaa yahnyaa.
Vah nizįį di'įį.

Kwat juu
dazhan
k'eegwiichy'aa yaa t'ii'in
gwiizųų yaa t'ii'in kwaa ts'a' vaa zhyaa vak'aa vaa daa'ąįį.
Ginkhii oaałkat dąį'
akwat ts'a' gwinzįį
gininlyaa ts'a' t'inchy'aa.

Vak'aa vaa
gwinzįį ji' vak'aa vaa daa'ąįį t'oonchy'aa
jyaa shahnyaa.

Aii gwik'it
nakhwatsii gwileii Rodrick t'inchy'a' t'igwinyaa.

Viti' aii
veeriginkhii kwaa ts'ąįį nizįį.

Aii chan gwintł'oo
gavaa t'ihchy'aa kwaa ts'a' gwįhdaii tthak ree.

And then he would just lie here on his back, and he would look people up and down, smiling;
he did that and then even while his breath was failing
he always spoke
quite clearly.

Women always
take care of
men who are sick.

Grandchild, he was really a man who had a dream (a medicine man)
but he said, "I didn't do wrong with it,"
and he told me about it.

Only his father, almost—
I suppose his father made him angry.
However,
he just said "almost."

However,
"I never did wrong with it," he said.
He had a good dream.

Whoever
is a medicine man
does as he ought with it,
doesn't do evil with it; it is just that the dream is upon him.
When I asked a priest,
he said it was all right
for a person to have [shamanistic] dreams.

If his dream
is good, when the dream is upon him,
is what he told me.

That is how
our poor dear grandfather Roderick was, so they say.

As for his father,
it's better we don't talk about him.

Well, [as for the Loolas],
I never stayed with them in all my life.

Tr'iinin ihłii dąį' gwizhrii ree vintł'eeshirihiłkhaa akhai' gwits'i' t'ihchy'aa.	When I was a child, they were going to give me to him, but I refused.
Va'at aii chan yeenduk hee Shahnyaati' gwinyaa aii vijuu gii aii t'ee William Loola yeedhidii gǫǫ.	His wife, now, was from over that way; they say she was Shahnyaati''s younger sister's daughter who was married to William Loola.
Goohałjii kwaa t'iginchy'aa.	I never did see them, though.
Akwat ts'a' dzat gwee'an t'ineechy'aa googaa chan yeenji' ts'ąįį chan t'ihchy'aa ts'a' yee'at chan t'ihchy'aa ts'a' łąą ti'yąą gwileii nąįį hoołjii kwaa.	He was living around here, but then I was living up the other direction, so because I was far away I never met with my dear father's people.
Tr'iinin nilįį dąį' gwats'an hee ginkhii nilįį varahnyaa t'inchy'aa.	From the time he was a child he was a preacher, so they say.
Akwat ts'a' ree yeenji' Englis nahkak ts'ąįį.	That was upriver, over in Canada.
Akhai' dzat gwee'an vits'i' tthak neezheegwihiltth'at varahnyaa.	And then he came down here, they say, when the place [Rampart] was relocated.
Dzaa ts'ąįį hee gohch'it chan ginkhii choo giyiłtsąįį kwaa nahąą.	On this side they never made him a minister, you know.
Aaa! gwintł'oo ninghuk ginkhii inli' t'inchy'aa.	Ah! he was a preacher for a long time.
Łyaa nishinyąąhchii.	He became very old.
Łyaa shiti' gwileii ninghuk gwindaii googaa nał'yą' kwaa.	My poor dear father really lived a long time but I never saw him.
Tr'iinin ihłįį dąį' chan yeenji' akwat t'ee dinjii ts'an dhiilit ts'a' oodit Fish Camp hee chan.	When I was a child I was upriver but then when I was given to a man I was down at Fish Camp.
Izhik gwizhrii zhyaa kwaragoodlii.	That's the only place we stayed.
Gohch'it tr'iinin goodlit aii chan neehidik.	Finally the child was born and was walking around.
It'ee yeedi' ts'ąįį chan tr'ahaajil.	Then we went down that way.
Akwat ts'a' łąą shiky'ąą nąįį haa t'ineeshichy'a' kwaa ts'a' tthak gookwaa goodlit.	But I really never went back to my family, and they all died.

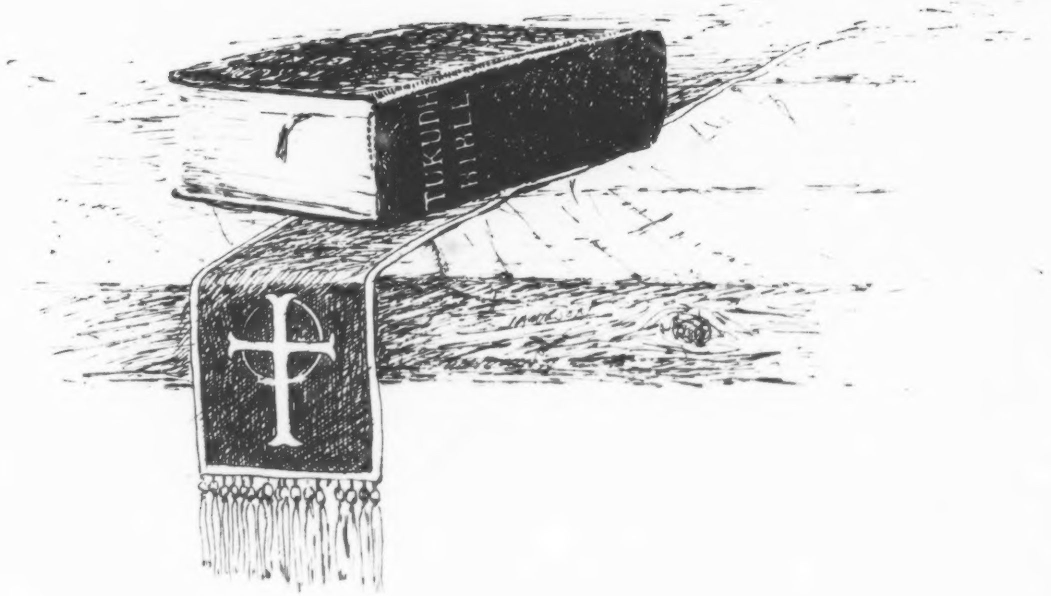
Loola t'ee ti'yąą veejii gii t'arahnyaa aii t'ee kit.	Loola, now, was the son of my father's older sister, they say, and he was the oldest.
Aii dahan nąįį deetak dhidii gwiizhik googaa idęhtły'aa chan kwaa gwanaa hee geegwaldak t'iihnyaa.	He was staying with his mother's family at that time, but there were no books at the time I'm telling about.
Aii chan yaaghat gwanaa hee dęhtły'aa goodlit t'oonchy'aa.	It was later on that books came.
Dęhtły'aa jyaa dąhtsii tsal aii ch'ilik idęhtły'aa vaa kharagidiinjii Bible aii haa nilįį tsal ree khehłok.	There was a book this small, that hymn book, a prayer book, and a Bible together in a small book, combined.
Aii tr'ookit goodlit ts'a' Neil yeenjit Old Crow shachaa Neil gwandaii gwinyaa viti' ginkhii dyąąhch'i' aii McDonald oozhii.	Those were the first that came; Neil upriver at Old Crow, my younger brother Neil is still living, I hear; his father was the preacher, the Old Man, whose name was McDonald.
Aii dęhtły'aa tthak inghan gwinyaa Bible choh aii googaa.	They say he made all those books, and even that big Bible.
Shitseii gwintł'oo gwintł'oo gwintsii gwitr'it t'agwąh'ya' gwinyaa t'oonchy'aa.	Grandchild he really worked very greatly, so they say.
Hee niinghit kwaa gwanaa dęhtły'aa tthak goodlit t'oonchy'aa. Zhyaa ree dęhtły'aa k'eejit neerahaazhik gwiizhik shitii yeenjit nji' ts'a' vits'i' neezheegwihiltth'at ts'a' dzaa ts'ąįį t'inchy'aa.	It was not very long ago that all those books came out. And just when the books were new, my father's brother went upriver, then when the building was relocated, he stayed back on this side.
Aii Loola aii zhrii ree neerąąh'ik gwizhrii.	That was Loola, we only saw him once in a while.
Akwat ts'a' tr'iinin ihłįį dąį' dzaa hee gwizhrii dalak nąįį tee t'inchy'aa.	But when I was a child, he only stayed here with his relatives.

Akwat ts'a' dink'iidhat oodit it'ee zhyaa tr'ihchoo goodlit ts'a' shoondee chan tr'ihchoo tł'i' k'ąhndak dhidlit roo.	And when I grew up, that was when boats started coming and my older brother became a boat captain!
Aiits'a' oodit Fish Camp hee t'irinchy'aa izhik shee'ii gwileii nąįį zhyaa zhat gwa'an tseegąąhzhii łii.	And then we were staying at Fish Camp where my dear old uncle [mother's brother] and his family were living too.
Akwat ts'a' Ch'eelil viti' nąįį haa aii chan dyąąhch'i' vigii nąįį gwanlįį aii nąįį teegagąąchy'aa ts'a'. Ch'anjaa gooteegwiłjik łii ts'a' izhik hee aii t'ee Ch'eelil viti'.	And also there was Ch'eelil's father's family, the old man and his many children, staying there then. There were some older people among them who were married; I'm talking about Ch'eelil's father.
Ch'eelil vahan aii viti' aii.	Ch'eelil's mother and his father, that is.
Akwat ts'a' izhik gwizhrii hee t'irinchy'aa aii gooti' chan gehdit Beaver gehjųų hee White Eye gwinyaa gwiintth'ak aii White Eye t'ee voozhri' t'inchy'aa.	So then, that was the only place we lived; and farther down, above Beaver, was White Eye—you've heard of him—his name was White Eye.
Aii ghaii gwizhrii chan town gwagwaa'įį. Tr'iinin shizhit dhidii gwiizhik izhik hee gwąął'in. Oo'at deedak gehdįį hee chan K'iidootin gagahnyaa izhik k'iidįį t'ee tr'ineeriijil ts'a' Fish Camp hee ree k'ineeriidal.	At his homesite a town grew up. I was pregnant and that was when I saw it. Far away up on the hill was the place they called K'iidootin, and through there we traveled and then we came back to Fish Camp.
Duuyee geełee rihiijyaa. Shigii k'idik tł'ee hee gohju' zhyaa ree ch'ihłee ree shoondee nąįį eh'at naraanąįį yiihthan akhai' ch'ihłee googaa neerihiljii kwaa ts'a' shoondee kit zhrii ree shandaa vizhii kwaa oodi' nishiriltsit roo.	We wouldn't leave that place. After my child arrived, finally for just a while, I thought, we left my older brothers, but we never met them again, except when my eldest brother was dying and then they brought me down to see him.
Akwat dzaa chan ree shidyąąhch'i' shaa idininjyaadhak ts'a' dzaa chan t'ihichy'aa kwaa gwich'in izhik ree shanach'aatan izhik t'ee t'ihchy'aa.	So here we stayed, my old man and I, according to his wishes; I didn't think I would be like this, but I'm just frozen to this place.

Tr'ookit ginkhii ik'igwihiljik izhik dǫhłii, aaa! shitseii gwintł'oo juk geech'oąąhtan kwaa t'oonchy'aa.	That was the first time we knew a preacher, I guess. Ah! grandchild, nowadays there is no one to teach.
Gwintł'oo ginkhii gwitr'it t'agwąh'ya' t'oonchy'aa.	The preacher really used to work hard.
Drin hee drin ch'ihłak, drin k'ideetak six days googaa datthak tr'iginkhii roo.	Every day, one day, a week, six days even they preached every day!
Neekwąįį tr'iginkhii drin zhit.	They preached twice on Sunday.
Aii gwiizhik chan geech'aroąąhtan.	And besides that, they taught us.
Shitseii nihłaa ginjagaaghoo gǫh'it t'igwinyaa.	Grandchild, they talked in low voices together, in secret.
Aiits'a' ch'ilik chan haa deegwinyaa li'.	And they also sang very loudly.
Aiits'a' t'ee geenihłaroąąhtan ants'a' geenihłaroąąhtan zhyaa ch'ilik diniighyaa ts'a'.	And so we taught each other, and then having taught each other we all sang together.
Yeedee chan ree geech'aroąąhtan gwinyaa zhyaa ch'iriheetth'ak oozhee dęhtły'aa aii zhrii kwaii haa ik'irahaandal.	Up here now they say there are teachers but we only listen to them and look at the book, and those things, that's all we do.
Akwat gwintł'oo ch'irihideetł'oo chan gwik'it ch'agąhjii kwaa łii roo.	Then they didn't teach people to write very much, you see.
Yeedak eenjit t'igwii'in kwaa ree.	That was no use in heaven.
Yeendaa tr'iginkhii zheh aii yeedak geech'oąąhtan. Gwintł'oo tr'ookit gwintł'oo dinjii gwitr'it t'agwąh'ya' aii ch'anjaa nąįį giky'anjik nąįį tthak kwaa goodlit. Juu gaandaii tsal nąįį tthak kwaa neegoholit. Juk łąą dęhtły'aa veegwitr'it t'aragwah'in kwaa roo.	Up there at the church they taught about heaven. Really, at first the people worked very hard, but those older people who learned that have all died. The ones who learned a little have all died off. Nowadays we don't work on the books at all.
Akwat nats'aa vaagwiheendaii gǫǫ.	Well then, how will it be known?
Shitseii łąą akwat juk jyaa doonchy'aa ts'a' oo'ok zhee goodlii duuyee ginkhii ch'ilik gidlii nahąą.	Grandchild, that's just the way it is today; in those houses out there they never sing hymns, you know.

Aii gwizhrii k'iidak ch'iihaahchik
  t'oonchy'aa.
Łi'haa, łi'haa
ch'iridlii diinzhee gwizhit ch'iridlii it'ee
łi'haa gwiheezyaa t'ee.

That's the only way we can make a
  joyful noise.
Really, really,
we ought to sing in our homes, and then
it would be really good.



24 Religion; fishtraps; the coming of airplanes; how a young man got a wife

Belle talks about how important Christianity is in her life. Reminded of the old days, she tells about the use of fishtraps woven from willows and spruce roots, and how eventually nets came into use. Another innovation she recalls is the airplane; this event occurred in 1925, as we know from Belle's mention of the Fort Yukon flu epidemic and the work of Burke, Rowe, and John Fredson. At the end of this account, Belle tells a little traditional story. The point of the story is that the old man had his adopted son marry not a pretty girl, but one who was a hard-working seamstress who would take good care of him and his household.

Aaa! shitseii	Ah! grandchild,
gwintł'oo	really,
gwintł'oo zhyaa	really we just
akwat shik Bible jyaa darąhthan	hold onto the Bible always,
adant'ee.	and I do it myself.
Nideediinol'in dǫhłii.	Perhaps he is waiting for us.
Gohch'it diłkhyuk zhree ch'iihaahchii kwaa li' nyaa roo.	I wonder why nobody has made a sound for so long, he says!
Ch'iridlii	If we sing,
tr'agwahtsii ji'	just make a sound,
yeedak hee	up in heaven
aii gwizhrii diihideetth'ak.	he will hear us.
Jyaa zhree geedan ginkhii nąįį geech'agoąątan	That's what the preachers used to teach,
lęįį nąįį gavaa t'inchy'aa nahąą.	and there were a lot of people staying with them, you see.
Izhik t'ee khazheerah'ee gahnyaa t'inchy'aa.	That's what they call a lot of shouting.

Akwat	And then
gwintł'oo	when
tr'aah'in vik'iranjii dąį'	we saw a lot about it we learned more about it;
gwintł'oo aakin gwanlįį ts'a' t'igwii'in k'it t'oonchy'aa.	it was really very new and interesting to us.
Adan kwat zhree	The Bible itself
dinjii diihaa ginkhii k'it zhree t'inyaa.	is just like a man talking to us about it.
Gwintł'oo vinkeerii'in ji'	If we search for it hard,
gwiheezyaa dǫhłii.	it will be good, maybe.
Akǫǫ	Now
gwandaii	he lives,
gwandaii nilįį	he is alive,
adan zhree gookeerihee'al gwinyaa t'igwinyaa, aii oodąą nineerihee'al jyaa zhree gwinyaa zhree	he himself, they say, is going to come back, he will come back down from heaven, they say,

aii t'ee łi'haa
yiky'anjik
nąįį zhree
diginjik noonjii akǫǫ zhree zhik zhyaa
yiky'anjik
yik'it daanjik aii zhree khayilzhii aii haa zhree yuuheendal k'it chan zhree t'iginyaa t'iginchy'aa.
Tseenjyaa, tseenjyaa łi'haa łi'haa t'ee nahgwan.
Deegwihee'yaa ginyaa łyaa datthak juk gwik'it Bible zhit
deegwinyaa tthak gwik'it gweedhaa t'oonchy'aa.

and really,
the ones
who have learned of him
he will take back then, just
those who know him,
who have learned the way, he will take them and go with them to that place, that is the way it is.
Do that way, do that way, really, really, time is short.
What the Bible says will happen
is all happening right now.

Łi'haa tr'injaa tr'inlįį neeshreerahaahchy'aa
łi'haa neeshreerahaahchy'aa.

Really, we women are very poor,
we are really poor.

Neeshraahchy'aa shagoodiinyaa
veegwitr'it t'agwahadhał'ya' dąį'
gwintł'oo shats'a' ch'eegwanzhrii chy'aa.
Shidyąąhch'i'
vik'iitł'uu yeedit tr'igijiinjii zhee tr'iginkhii gwałtsii.

I was poor but blessed,
and when I began to do the Lord's work,
it was very good for me.
My old man
left me behind down at the church and I made service.

Sarah
Salmon shits'inyaa ts'a'
akwat dzaa gwizhit chan Bible eech'oąąłtan chan dzaa gwizhit.
Akwat nijii hee ginkhii nilįį nąįį dęhtły'aa vintł'eerahtsuu tsi' naachii roo.
Akwat jyahts'a' gwintsal shats'an gwigwiłtsaii.
Aakin ch'igwiidlii ts'a' shats'an gwaatsii.
Łyaa gadoiit'aii gaa zhree it'ee nał'in kwaa.

Sarah
Salmon was helping me and
here in my house I taught the Bible too.
He had the lay reader's papers they gave him, but he lay down after that.
So in that way something happened with me.
I tried hard, but then I couldn't see any longer.

Yeedee gwa'an chan Bishop Rowe vipicture dhałtin t'oonchy'aa.
Aaa!
gwintł'oo sheet'igiindhan t'iginchy'aa.
Gavaał'ya' kwaa t'inchy'aa nats'aa it'ee gwizhrii neegavaal'ik zhree.
Akwat oo'ok hee t'ihchy'aa duuyee Gwichyaa Zhee gwihch'ii t'ihchy'aa deiinyaa.

Somewhere up there I have Bishop Rowe's picture, too.
Ah!
They really liked me, he and his wife.
I only saw them once in a while.
I stayed out of town all the time, I didn't stay in Fort Yukon.

Akwat ts'a' neeshagaa'ik gwizhrii roo.
Shandaa chan ginkhii tr'iłtsąįį t'inchy'aa.
Bishop tr'iłtsąįį t'inchy'aa.

[They had a conversation about Mrs. Burke and the family, and the old pictures.]

Ooduk
Yukon
zhyaa kih chyaa choo jyaa dinchy'aa nahąą.

Aii yi'eendaa teetł'an
k'iindaa
dachan
eeshreegąąhkyaa
aii k'iindaa t'igilik ts'a' ah k'aii jyaa dinchy'aa aii nan zhit
khaih kharaahtsy'aa aii haa
tr'itł'uu ts'a'
łyaa ninjyaa
ts'a' jidii ts'ik njyaa gahtsii vizhit gweedii nilįį ts'a'
aiits'a' nihky'aa gwatrał khaih haa digiyah'in aii nihky'aa jyaa dagah'in aii t'ee khii k'iidii hijyaa
vizhijyaa zhree,
aii ooduk hee.
Kwat ts'a' k'ǫǫ chan oodee da'andlee.

Aii chan k'iinji' jyaa dinchy'aa tr'ahtsii.
Aii gwats'an nji' ts'a' chan t'inchy'aa.

Aii t'ee
vizhit gwaghoo gwanlįį
vizhit ch'eelu'
t'oo vizhit deelzhii.

Aiits'a' oozhee vachan kak chan k'ii t'arąhthan.

Aiits'a'
deedraa tr'oohootaii tr'ahtsik.

Aiits'a' vaa di' gach'arakaii yit chųųtral dha'ąįį t'eeli'
łuk lęįį
ts'a' jyaa darah'in.
Da'andlee kwaa
ah
ghoo jidii ghoo tr'ahtsii vizhit rilii ts'a' k'aii vivęę jyaa darah'in ts'a' zhyaa jidii ts'ik njyaa tr'ahtsik.

They only saw me once in a while.
He was ordained while I was around.
He was made a bishop.

Down
around the Yukon
there was this big sandbar, you know.
Out around toward the middle
right out there
they made
a pointed pole
which they put across; then they took spruce roots from the ground;
they took the roots out and with them
they wove something and
really long
and narrow they made it, so that its inside was long, and
then they made a network of roots each way, extending from each side; and whatever salmon were going upstream
went into it,
that thing down there.
Right there in a small creek they set their fishtrap.
Up that way, we made it like that.
It extends farther up that way.

And
it had a round opening,
and into it little whitefish
swam.
Down on the bottom we put birchbark.

And
they made something to sit on; they made it very strong.

And with that we drove the fish in there;
there were so many
they made a splashing noise.

Those who had no fishtraps
made dipnets,
round dipnets with frames of willow around their openings, made long.

Aiits'a' zhyaa łuk yizhit jyaa.

K'iinji' neegwąąhtsaii gwaghaii ts'a'
k'iidii ah chųųdlii ts'a' aii ah zhit jyaa.

Aiits'a' zhree it'ee neegiihaah'ik ts'a' zhyaa
zhree oonjit nji' ts'a' deedoogiyii'at.
Ts'a' nji' ts'a' łuk kharilii jyaa darah'in
khii kwaii haa tthak ts'a'
akwat ts'a'
chihvyaa chan kwaa roo.

Nats'aa gwik'iighai' chihvyaa gwiheelyaa.

Zheegwadhaa aii zhree ch'eetak nąįį
zheegwadhaa gaa,
tr'ikhit zhree ninghuk zheegwadhaa giyaa'įį
gwich'in ts'a' azhrąįį.
Jyaa zhree doonchy'aa ts'a' zhree chihvyaa
gohch'it hee gwanaa ninghit kwaa zhree
tr'il gwiheelyaa gwats'a' nąhjyaa zhree
chihvyaa tr'iilee iltsąįį chan gwanlįį kwaa
roo.

Jidii chihvyaa tr'iheetły'aa aii zhree
giyitł'uu ts'a' giitthal vik'eevee haat'aii
chan giyaatł'aadhat dǫhłii ch'eetak nąįį
zhrii kyaa dinchy'aa.
Datthak akwaa.

Akoo ts'a' t'ee
shin
khaii haa t'ee geh ghat dich'irintł'ii gwiizhik
geetak hee chan k'oo gwat'araahchy'aa.
Jyaa doonchy'aa aaa! shitseii, neeshreegwaahchy'aa.

Chihvyaa gahtsik aii haa tr'ijit oo'ok
nihk'eegaahtii ts'a' gwintł'oo dinjii
nihk'aahtii t'igwinyaa.
Gwat'araahchy'aa gwatsal goo'ąįį kwaa roo.
Zhyaa zhree ndaa geedaa nats'aa.

Aaa! shitseii gwintł'oo
neeshreegwaahchy'aa.

Shitseii
gwintł'oo
ch'iheet'aa gaagwiindaii kwaa.

And the fish just went right into it.

Where the fishtraps ran across there was
a dipnet and that's where the fish went in

And whenever they saw one, they would
untie the net and take the fish out.

And that was how people used to catch
salmon in those days,
when
there were no fishnets.

How would we get fishnets?

And as for tents, only a few people had
tents, and
they had those tents so long they were
blackened (by smoke).

So that's the way it was, and finally we
got fishnets, and not long afterward we
even got fishwheels, not long after we
got the first readymade fishnets.

They wove nets and
ran a line along the top edge, and wove
from that; only some people had those.
Not all of them.

And
in summer
and winter they snared rabbits, and sometimes in between we used fishtraps on
the creeks.
That's the way it was,
ah, grandchild, times were hard.

They made fishnets and with them they got
a living out in the bush; they really
helped one another.
There was no outside source for things.
They just made do with what there was.

Oh! grandchild, it was really
hard times.

Grandchild,
really,
we didn't know airplanes would fly in.

Dinjii ilee
gwiizhik t'igwii'in t'igwinyaa.

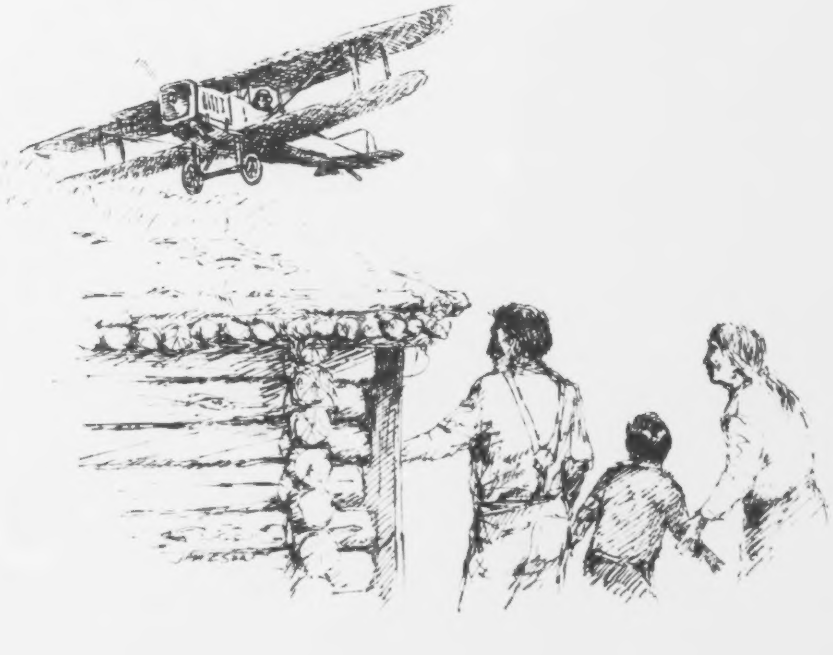
Kwat ts'a'
yaaghat
Doctor Burke
aii
Bishop Rowe haa
aii
Zhoogwaatsan nik'ee vanandaii aii nąįį haa tik dinjii k'eegiiłtii
soup neegaahthal tyąhchoo zhit kwaiitee neegahaazhik.

Aii gwiizhik t'ee dinjii
it'ee dinjii gwintł'oo an ninjii it'ee gwinzįį neegwahaali' gwiizhik
ch'eet'aa zhree gwinyaa.

A rich man
was doing that, they say.

Then
that man,
Doctor Burke,
he
and Bishop Rowe
and
John Fredson, those three were taking care of people,
going around the village, taking soup around in a big pot.

During that time people
were really dying off, and when they began to get better,
it was said that a plane would come.



Lęįį nąįį iłts'ik ts'a' dats'aa ts'a' chiinjil t'igwinyaa.
Shant'ee zhree.

Zhyaa zhree yaak'iikyaa zhik
oodit school zhee gwiyeendak shizhee goo'ąįį kwat yaaghat zhat k'iikyaa
tły'ahtr'an choo neet'aa k'it zhree t'igwii'in.

Aaa! shitseii, yee'at Ch'oonjik hee neeheet'aa gwinyaa.
Launch haa yee'at theetaa haa
jyaa zhyaa digwii'in.

Gwintł'oo iłts'ik nąįį googaa t'ee oo'an haajil dǫhłii.

Kwat t'ee oo'at gwinzįį gwizhrii nineeniit'ee ts'a' duuyee.
Gohch'it chan ndaa ts'a' oo'an
shant'ee zhree.

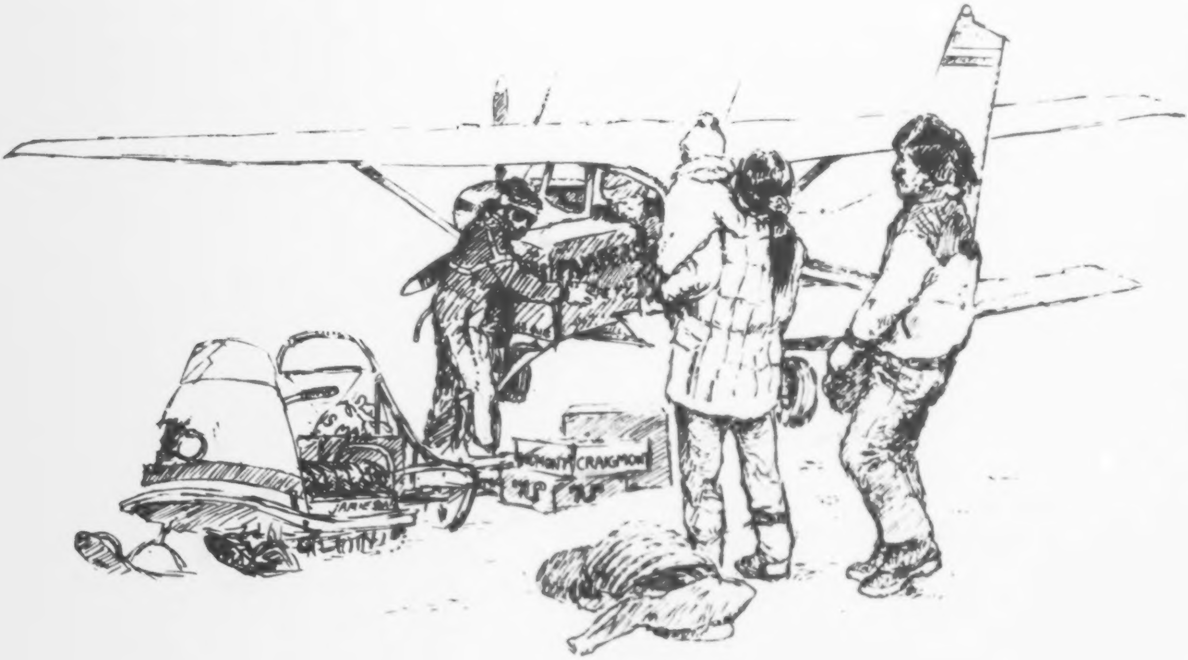
A lot of people who were sick went out with their blankets around them.
I was among them, too.

It was flying right around here,
right back of the school—
the plane looked like a big dragonfly.

Ah! grandchild, they said it was going to land over at the Porcupine.
With a launch and over the portage
we all went there.

Even the people who were really sick went over there.

How amazing that it should fly around so well!
So finally I went over there,
even I.



It'ee zhree k'eediihilzhik. Gwik'eerigwahąhdaii. Chan tr'agookwat.	Then he started to take us around. We started to try it. We also paid.
Aaa! nitsii zhree gwintsal vanan ch'eenjik.	Ah! your grandfather always had a little money.
Daada' shįį haa it'ee chan k'eenakhwarahahchik chan tr'igwiłtsąįį.	Nena Peterson and I arranged to take a ride in the plane.
Aaa! shitseii oojit seventeen mile garahnyaa izhik t'ee ninikhwelchii. Łyaa zhree nakhwaa gwinzįį.	Ah! grandchild, he took us up there to where they call it Seventeen Mile. We really had a good time.
Aaa! shitseii it'ee dinjii nąįį oo'ęę neeniit'ee ts'a' jyaa darah'in ts'a' oo'ok neerahahchik aii vizhit gidiigwarah'ee zhree.	Ah! grandchild, then the people came back and went again with it, the way they taught us to get used to it, to be used to being in it.
Aii zhree heedąį' ninghit kwaa gwanaa gwats'an izhik zhree k'eeniit'ee, k'eeniit'ee t'oonchy'aa.	Now that was not very long ago when planes started to fly, when it first flew here.
Ooduk deegwii'in ninghuk gwaał'in kwaa t'oonchy'aa. Oonjuk gwizhrii gwirich'ii ts'a'.	I didn't see what was going on down the river all the time. We only lived upriver.
Aaa! shitseii gwik'injihshit łąą adoodishinyaa kwaa. Shidyąąhch'i' vigwihehkwaa gwats'a' ninghit gwats'an Doctor Burke yeeduk diginchy'aa gwanaa hee gwats'an tr'ijit iidik'ik.	Ah! grandchild, I don't know what I believe in myself. Long before my old man died, Dr. Burke preached up here and from that time we started praying.
It'ee izhik gwats'an tr'ijit khagidiniijii gwik'eegwiindaii. Jyahts'a' gwizhrii ree.	From then on, we tried to pray all the time. That's all.
Akwat ts'a' dinjii shits'i' kwaa ts'a' jyeihchy'aa. Ishik'ik gwałtsii gwizhrii ree. Aii t'ee dąhthee ginkhii tr'ahahtsyaa gwats'a' hee gwats'an iidik'ik t'oonchy'aa.	Now my man is gone, so that's the way I am. I pray, that's all I do. Before he was ordained, we started to pray.
Aiits'a' Bishop Rowe chan nakhwak'aa ginhe' jyaa gwizhrii.	And then Bishop Rowe confirmed us, that's all.

Aiits'a' tr'al zhit gwizhrii t'ihchy'aa ts'a' jyaa dinchy'aa. Kharigidiinjii łyaa ninghit dąį' gwats'an t'igwinyaa t'oonchy'aa.	And we just stayed in the bush, that's just the way I am. We started to pray a long time ago.
Akwat kharigidiinjii aii ree it'ee ree k'eegwaadhat gwinyaa ree adant'ee adats'a' dinjii a'ee k'iighai' t'igwii'in t'igwinyaa akoo ree. Aii ree łi'haa t'inyaa aii ree tr'oohaahky'aa gǫǫ zhyaa t'igwinyaa k'it t'oonchy'aa aii chihdan gwįįdhat gwaatsii.	Then we prayed, and when we say "Lord" he wants us to pray, and that's what we did, and that's the truth, and he's the only one to listen to. And if we don't do it from the heart, it's no good.
Yeenaa shehnaa gwats'an hee dinjii zhat kwaiik'it gwaa'ii gwinyaa tr'igwiitth'ak. Gwichyaa Zhee gwich'in nąįį łineegaadal dąį' oo'at nan kak googaa ninjehkheii k'ii'an neegihiidal gwinyaa gwiihtth'ak gwizhrii ree.	Even before people had villages there, we heard about it. When the Fort Yukon people used to get together, they took turns going back and forth, and we heard, that's all.
Yeenaa nan dha'ąįį tthak kwaiik'it gogwaa'ii gwich'in roo. Oodit Nenana Tanana kwaii haa tthak ts'a' shehnaa ninghit gwats'an hee jyaa digii'in googahnyaa.	Since the earth was here, they have had settlements all around here. Down at Nenana, and Tanana, all of that was before my time, that's how they lived a long time ago.
Łąą gwinzįį googwitr'it dihtth'ak kwaa. Heedąį' ninghit kwaa gwats'a' vaanoodlit town gwihiłtsąįį gwinyaa t'oonchy'aa.	I don't know much about their work. From not very long ago white men started the town, I heard.
Gehnaa dąį' dinjii zhuu zhrii ree. Shehnaa gwats'an hee oo'an khehtak niłeeneegiidal googahnyaa. Gwinzįį gaashandaii kwaa t'iihnyaa.	Before that there were only Native people. Before my time, I heard they visited each other. As I said, I don't know much about it.
Zhyaa niłeegwarachii kwaa zhyaa dinjii dįhch'i' zhrii ree eeriginkhii. Ch'ihłan chan dįhch'i' tsyaa dinky'ahkhit.	People never got married. There was one old man people told about. Once upon a time an old man was raising a young man.

Jyahts'a' ts'ąįį ree
aiits'a'
tsyaa zų'
yaghąįį dhidii.

Aiits'a' it'ee digii eenjit tr'injaa oohaanjik.

Yeendaa tr'ihijyaa vanh
khał tsal geelil aii łąįį googaa kwaa t'igwinyaa nahąą
gwinyaa.

Nich'it tsyaa nąįį gaa dagwagwach'aa khał tsal haa geelil.

Akwat ts'a' tr'ihijyaa
ts'a' k'iinii tr'iheedaa izhik zhee gwaghoo digii haa gwiltsąįį.

It'ee digii eenjit tr'injaa ooheendal ree.

Aaa! nich'it zų' nąįį hijyaa
datthak yeendaa tr'ahaajil.
Yeenjit k'iinii zhyaa ree
ky'aat'iichy'aa zhyaa ree
dazhoo thał
vitsii vakwai'
tsii zhoo'yuu dazhoo ik t'oo choo naatsuu ts'a'
dazhoo dzirh vidi' neehotthak
chan zhiiljik ts'a'
dazhoo inghii k'eevee łihts'ineet'uu dazhoo aii vał deetły'aa a'ii yaa k'ii'ee dagwach'aa tłik ilil
tąįį hee
yaa'ok oozhii.

Aii t'ee yeenjit
oonjik.

This is the way it was,
and
that handsome young man
was staying with him.

So he was going to get a woman for his son.

The people were leaving in the morning,
pulling little sleds since they didn't have dogs at that time,
so they say.

Young girls and boys hauled their stuff with little sleds.

So they were leaving, and along the way he had his little round tent and his son.

Then he was going to get a wife for his son.

Ah! the good-looking girls left,
they all left.

Then along toward them came
an ugly girl,
in her fur pants
with the feet attached,
and wearing her fur parka that was very white and furry and
fur mittens with fringe around the top
on her hands, and
she was hauling her sled loaded with clothing along with a string of braided fur,
and she
passed by.

That's who
he got for him.

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25 Another marriage story; old-time dishes and cooking

Belle begins with another traditional story, this time about how an old man got a husband for his adopted daughters by testing the carving skills of the young men. Again, not the handsome one but the hard-working one wins out. She talks about birch-bark dishes, and then describes how food was boiled in a wooden container by dropping red-hot rocks into the liquid.

It'ee eegwąhchįį ts'a' zhyaa ree nich'it gwidzuu gąįh ree t'inlik.	Well, somebody married him off to a poor skinny little girl.
Gwintł'oo diinzhit tr'ideegoołkhit.	It sure made us feel bad.
Aiits'a' ree yeendaa gwandaa gweedhaa t'ee akwat zhyaa ree zhehk'aa gwachoh geiintrat ree zhyaa ree gwadhaa ree yeendee dagwach'aa tł'ik ghaih tseeniichįį zhyaa vaa gwiindhaa dǫhłii.	Later on after some time passed, she set up a big family house; it was warm in there and she stayed there in her old ragged clothes and kept warm, I guess.
Akwat ree it'ee it'ee gwitr'it t'igwigwihił'ya'. Gohch'it ree tr'iinin gwilęįį it'ee łąą tr'iinin nąįį datthak dink'injik.	And then then she started working. Finally there were many children, then the children all grew up.
Tł'ee it'ee ree geegwihildak dǫhłii zhik dinjii veegwandak ąhchii.	After that he started to tell about it, this man told about his marriage.
Aaa! it'ee zų' nąįį hijyaa akoh yiihthan gwiizhik dįhch'i' gavąąh'in googaa geet'iindhan kwaa k'it t'inchy'aa.	Ah! there were good-looking girls walking by, and I wanted one now, but my old man didn't agree on it.
Yaaghat k'iinii nik'ee ky'aat'iichy'aa ch'eelil, zhyaa ree ihdeetoontthaii dąį' shizhit gwąhtrii yahnyaa varahnyaa.	There was a poor little girl not even fit to look at, and the old man stopped her with his cane; that really made me cry inside, he said.
It'eełichy'aa khehkwaii nąįį shee ahaanjyaa yuu li' t'oihchy'aa nyaa varahnyaa. Geeragwąhchįį t'igwii'in roo.	But the fact was that she was going to make me a wealthy man, though I didn't know it then, he said. Somebody married them, that's what happened!
[Alice asked if a preacher married them.]	

Nakwaa juu ginkhii geegwahahchyaa?	No, what preacher was going to marry them?
Łyaa ree akwaa nihłeegoorahahchyaa gaagiindaii kwaa nats'aa.	It wasn't like that, people then didn't know about marriage.
Dinjii ch'ihłak chan nich'it neekwąįį nąįį dinky'ahjii. Goohan hąhchik dǫhłii.	One man, also, was raising two girls. I suppose he had married their mother.
Aii nich'it kǫ' neekwąįį nąįį yeendit idits'ii givilzhii ts'a' gwich'ii.	There were two young girls, and he let them live opposite him.
Zheh ch'akwan tsal gavaa neeha'ak.	He set up a little sod house for them.
Gohch'it khał gahtsii aii k'iidak vizhin yaa'ee gahtsii aii vałoochan gwanlįį lirh goodeetak iłtin.	Finally they made a sled, and between them he put those little sticks that support it, with dirt on the wood.
Aii, aii juu nizįį iłtsąįį ji' aii giveeheedyaa ghan.	And whoever cleaned them would marry them.
Akwat tsyaa zų' nąįį nihdineedal yaaghat shrii gwanh tsal yeedee gwideetak iłtin aii k'it t'inch'ii dzat k'iizhak giidhaa zhyah'ee giyaa khin neech'įįltaii.	Then nice-looking boys came around, with little knives just like that one up there; they carried them in sheaths hanging around their necks.
Aii khagaahtthak ts'a' it'ee giyeetsiigwahaazhii ts'a' gał ts'ik goodeetak dhitin.	And they would take it out and start carving on those thin sticks there.
Aaa! zhyaa ree yaaghuk chihdeegwagwąąhtrit jyaa neegiihaahkhal cheegihii'oo.	Ah! they would just cut on it clumsily and then leave it lying and go outside.
Gohch'it it'ee ky'aat'iichy'aa ghwan aaa!	Finally here came a poor funny-looking person. Oh!
Nihdeiinzhii gwaląįį chan yeedit nich'it deetak chan niinzhii ts'a' yeezhee khał k'i' oonjik dǫhłii.	He came in, poor thing, and sat down between the girls and picked up the sled stick, I guess.
Aaa! shitseii! aii eenileegwaazhii oonin gwiizhik yąąh'in.	Ah! grandchild, he carved on it, while the old man over there watched him.
Oonin yik'indąąhtii zhyaa ree, khał ts'ik zų' hee iłtsąįį oondit.	Across the room, he cut on it carefully, and made a fine thin sled stick.
It'ee ts'įį ganaanjik cheehidii gwiizhik datoo yihdeiintthaii. It'ee yeegwąhchii roo.	Then he slowly got up, and as he went out, he stopped him with his cane. And then he married her!

Oo'an digwitłik zhrii keehozhii ts'a' it'ee ree
it'ee.
Jyahts'a' gwizhrii digwii'in gwinyaa t'oonchy'aa.
Kwat łąą yeedak gaagiindaii kwaa nats'aa.

Aaa! shitseii aii yaaghat hee gwanaa yaaghuk ch'aragwąh'ąįį gwinyaa hee
ninghuk kwaa roo.
Aii vijuu gwanaa hee vagoodlit t'inchy'aa.
Jidii vizhit ch'ara'aa kwaii.
Gwikįh Englis ts'an chuntyąh ch'iitsii dril k'ik t'ak
aii oondaa lidii tyąh
yee'at ree Englis lidii tyąą khadal'ąįį gaa oo'at hee dha'ąįį
aii haa zhrii ree.
Tyąh
theetryąh tyąh shriit'ąhtsii haa gwanlįį
aii haa zhrii ree.

Akwat łąą
ch'iitsiigwal
shrii kwaii haa
shrii choo zhrii ree shriit'ąhthee gwanaa gwats'an Englis ts'an vagoodlit gwizhrii.
Dachan haa gwitr'it t'aragwah'in aii ree
aii jidii shovel.

He went back and got his ragged clothes,
that's all.

That's the only way they used to do.
We didn't know anything about heaven.

Ah! grandchild, it was not long ago when they struck gold, they say,
not long at all.
Shortly after that things started happening.
There were dishes.
There were tin cups and dishes from Canada,
and a teakettle,
I have a Canadian teakettle but it's out there,
and that was all.
The kettle
is copper, a medium-sized kettle,
that also.

And also
forks
and knives,
and butcher knives from Canada have been around for quite a while.
We worked with wood and
some kind of shovel.

Aii k'iik'ik
jidii tsal ts'a' giyahtsik
aiits'a' khaii haa
t'igiyah'in.
Akwat jidii haa t'igiihah'yaa gǫǫ tthah
choo zhrii gii'įį nats'aa.
Tthah tsal chan gii'įį kwaa nats'aa.
Akwat ts'a' ree
k'iik'ik
tr'ahtsii aii t'ee ree
tr'ijit vaashandaii.

Aii
shih tsal
nijin gahtsii aii k'iik'ik jyaa dąhtsii
gahtsii nahąą.

Aii zhit hee
giyahgąįį ts'a'
k'ih haa giideekat nanch'adąąhkąį' ts'a'
njaa gaatsii.
Jyaa digii'in.

As for the birchbark dish,
they made it rather small
and then they fixed it
with roots.
They did that with a tool; all they had
was a big awl.
They didn't have any needles then.
And then
they made
the birchbark dish and
I know how.

And when
they made
a little food, they made the birchbark plate
this big, you see.

And then
they dried it and
sewed it around the edge with sinew and
made a cover for it.
That's what they did.

Akwat ts'a'
khaii tyąh
chan ree gahtsii k'it t'igii'in.

Gwintł'oo dzaa tr'ookit
niizhii hee
k'iik'ik haa gwintł'oo lęįį giłtsąįį t'iginchy'aa yee'ok.
Aii ree yi'eenin tr'ahaadlii dǫhłii.

David hagaa k'iik'ik
ahtsii roo.

Aii gwintł'oo tr'ookwat.

Shitseii gwintł'oo deenaadąį' ree
k'iik'ik tsal gaatsii dǫhłii.

Oo'ok
ch'aghat
aat'oo
nan zhit vaghat
aii khagilii aii
spoon choo gwich'in gahtsii.

Spoon giyahtsii k'it t'inchy'aa
jidii ghoo chan giyahtsii
jidii jeiinchy'aa chan gahtsii.

Aii t'ee giizhit chųų dinii chan t'igiyah'in dǫhłii.

Akwat ts'a' aii
deenaadąį' ree tyąh kwaa dąį' ree
kii haa ch'arahvir ree ginyaa.

Dachan choo zhit tr'gwigwiilik dǫhłii.
Traa choh
jyaa dąhtsii vizhit tr'gwigwiilik ts'a' aii vizhit gwintsii gogwahtsik.

Aiits'a' oo'ok kii
shriit'ąhtsii tsal aii lęįį neegahaazhik.
Aii it'ee ch'arahahvir dąį' oondaa kǫ' nitsii gahtsik kak
deegiyilik
aii kii.

Aiits'a' zhik
vizhit ch'arahahvir zhit chųų
dizhit ganjal.

And then
they also made
baskets out of roots in a certain way.

When I first
was walking around
they made a lot of birchbark baskets around here.
I think they even took them Outside.

Even David
was making birchbark baskets.

And they sold it for a good price.

Grandchild, very long ago
I guess they made birchbark dishes for themselves.

They dug out that
birch
stump
out in the woods
and made big spoons, I think.

They made a spoon like this,
they made it round too,
just as they make them now.

I think they used them to drink water.

And also
a long time ago when there were no pots
we boiled water with rocks, they say.

They carved out a big block of wood, I think.
In a block of wood
about this big, they carved out the inside and made it big inside.

Then outside
they got a lot of pretty small rocks.
And then when they were going to cook, they made a big fire and on it
they put
those rocks.

And then
they poured into the pot
the water they were going to boil.

Aii zhit shih vir gahtsii dizhit gilik.	Into it they put the meat they were boiling.
Dachan vizhit kheekil choo zhit.	In that big carved wooden thing.
Akwat ree yeendaa jii gwintł'oo gwaak'a' ts'a' jinjir ree dąąhdryą'.	Then the fire was really big, so the rocks quickly got red-hot.
Aii ree vizhit tr'ilik ts'a' aaa! ree zhik shih neeridąąhdaa gwiizhik dąąhdlat.	Then they put them in it and ah! they kept turning the food while it boiled.
Dąąhdlat ts'a' łyaa vaa neeriilii kwaa dąhthee heek'i' kwats'a' ninghuk dąąhdlat.	When it boiled they never left it alone until the rocks cooled off; it boiled a long time.
Aaa! shitseii, gwinzįį vizhit nilįį vikichy'aa t'arahnyaa.	Ah! grandchild, the meat cooked well in it, so they say.
Yaaghat gwanaa tyąh zhit vikeegaachy'aa googaa aii chų' googaa itr'igii'ee ts'a' aii kii haa vikeerahchy'aa chų' gwintł'oo nizįį ginyaa t'ee.	In later times, when they cooked in pots, they didn't like the broth, but when they cooked with rocks, they say the broth was really good.
Gwintł'oo vizhit gwinzįį viki'ichy'aa.	It really cooked well in it.
Jyaa chan digwee'ya' gwinyaa.	That's what they used to do, they say.
Tyąh kwaa akwat ree.	There were no pots.
Kii kiriilik gwiizhik t'ee virh tr'ahtsii ts'a' t'ee dachan tyąh choo zhit shih dizhit rilik aii tee kii dąąhdryą' dizhit rahdal chyaa ree dąąhdlat ts'a' ninghuk t'inchy'aa.	They put rocks on the fire while they prepared the meat and then into the wooden pot they put the food and then they threw the red-hot rocks into it and it just boiled for a long time.
Jyahts'a' gwizhrii ree gaashandaii.	That's all I know about what they did.

26 Life in the old days; brush men; the coming of religion

After talking a little about the nomadic hunting way of life, Belle mentions again how deeply people mourned deaths in the old days, compared to modern times. She tells how people reacted to the first trading posts, when goods such as tea and copper pots first arrived. She tells a story she once heard about a brush man and speculates on the nature and origin of these fearsome supernatural beings. She talks about the influence of Christian religion on her life, and mentions McDonald and the Native lay preachers who worked in her country.

Old Crow gwa'an chan neehihdik t'oonchy'aa.	I've been around Old Crow, too.
Yeendak ts'ąįį chan neehihdik t'oonchy'aa.	I have been up on that side too.
Circle chan neehihdik yeedi' Teetsii chan tik nineedhishizhii.	I've been around around Circle, too. I went downriver three times.
Yee'at Fairbanks aii chan jyaa dagwąąhchy'aa neegwaal'ya' jyaa gwizhrii ree. Fish Camp gwa'an chan zhyaa ree naraazhrii t'eedaraa'in gwizhrii ree.	There at Fairbanks too, I went around there a few times, that's all. And around Fish Camp we hunted and made our living, that's all.
Izhik chan jyaa gwizhrii.	There, that's all.
Aiits'a' tr'iinin ihłįį dąį' yi'eenji' yee'at gwitł'it k'iinji' nidhizhii gwizhrii ree. Nihky'aa gwintł'oo neehihdik kwaa ts'a' jyaa dihchy'aa.	And then, when I was a child, I went far up to the headwaters of that river up that way, that's all. I don't go to very many places, I just stay here.
Aii chan dzan keeshi'ya' kwaa ts'a' zhyaa neehihdik.	I never hunted for muskrats there, I've only been there.
Two times zhat nineedhishizhii gaa chan k'eiich'ii eenjit gwitr'it t'agwał'in kwaa shidyąąhch'i' zhrii ree.	I've gone there two times but I didn't do that kind of work, only my old man did.
Vizhit tr'iinin googaa chan tr'iinin choo aghwaa aii t'ee zhik vats'ooghai' neegwidii.	Even though I was pregnant, I was packing the other child that I had had before.
	[Alice: Even so, she was working.]

Duuyee dinjii yats'a' tr'injii.
Googaa nihk'it
vit'įį tr'iinin gwintł'oo
itree googaa.

Akwat ts'a' aii
giheenjyaa neegwigwitł'uk tr'iinin nąįį chan neegitł'uk,
val ch'agahchaa ts'a' łąįį neekwąįį geetak łąįį tik.
Geetak hee łąįį ch'ihłak.
Aii t'ee ni'ęę ree
gwandaii tthak łąįį neekwąįį ee'į'.
Oo'ok ree tik gwanljįį
geetak hee chan dǫǫ.
Akwat shitseii gwintł'oo tr'injaa nąįį gwitr'it t'agwah'in t'igwinyaa.

Akwat yaaghat
nahan
neeghwaa gwiizhik tr'iinin it'ee diinzhit
shriit'ąhtsii googaa neeghwaa it'ee vigwiinjik nahąą.
Izhik gwanaa googaa jyaa digwii'in t'oonchy'aa.
Khik tr'iinin tr'eeghwaa gwizhrii
chy'aa
ninghuk kwaa gwats'an duuyee tr'iinin tr'eeghwaa gwaał'in.
Tr'iinin tr'eeghwaa dąį' chan yaaghat diint'įį
chan ree zhyaa vak'at ditł'eedii zhit tr'iinin dhidii chan ree an'a'ee chan ree ineekhwaa rahaachak chan ree.

Łąįį ghwaa haa ree
k'eiich'ii neegahaazhik.

Aaa! shitseii, łyaa gwinzįį gaashandaii kwaa roo.
Dzaa gwizhrii t'ihchy'aa ts'a' nihky'aa łąą neerihiidal kwaa tr'ih zhit
gwizhrii ree.
Akwat ts'a' nan kak neerihiidal kwaa ts'a'
dzaa gwa'an goo'ąįį t'oonchy'aa.
Juk doonchy'aa gwik'it.

A man wouldn't help a woman.
Even though
the child on her back
really cried a lot.

Now then,
when they were about to move they bundled everything and dressed the kids
and tied it all to the sled, with two dogs, sometimes three.
Sometimes only one dog.
My mother
had two dogs all her life.
Some people had three dogs
and some had four.
Grandchild, the women really worked hard.

Now that one,
your mother,
carried you on her back while she was pregnant
she even kept carrying you around and got hurt that way, you see.
Even at that time they were still doing that.
We always packed the kids, that's all
we used to do
but more recently, I haven't seen people packing kids any more.
When we packed the kids there was a thing on our backs
like a chair, and the kids would sit in it facing backwards, and in that way we carried them around.

They carried things
in dog packs.

Ah! grandchild, I really don't know much about it.
I only stayed here and never went out anywhere except with a canoe,
that's all.
We never traveled around the country and
we just made our home here,
just as it is now.

Akwat ts'a' it'ee tr'ahadal ts'a' it'ee oondaa nijin neegwiheek'al gwats'a' ree.	But we would travel around until fall came.
[Alice asked a question.]	
Aaa! shitseii gwintł'oo dinjii nihłagogwąhdaii. Akwat aakin gwilik it'ee deegwąhtł'oo dinjii giyeet'indhan dinjii aakin gwilik roo.	Ah! grandchild, people used to respect each other a lot. When strangers came around, they showed what affection they had for the people who came.
Akwat zhyaa oo'at zhat gwizhrii khach'at'oo gadąąh'ai' datthak.	Then everyone would just crowd around them.
Aaa! shitseii izhik łyaa gaashandaii kwaa.	Ah! grandchild, I really don't know about that.
Khehłan gwizhrii geetak t'iginchy'aa ts'a' zhik gwizhrii łiriidaa ts'a' łąą khaii hee chan dachąąval haa zhrii roo.	Sometimes they stayed in one place, and sometimes they moved from place to place in the wintertime in a toboggan, that's all.
Akwat ts'a' shih gooheendal gwizhrii hee chan łąįį ghwaa t'agąąhchy'aa. Zhat gwats'a' giheedaa dąį' gwizhrii chan aii gwizhrii łąįį ghwaa. Aii gwiizhik geedant'ee khwaagahdaa. Tr'iinin aghwaa googaa ehzhee chan ch'eeghwaa roo jyaa dii'in. Aaa!	Well, when they were going to transport some food is the only time they used dog packs. Only when they were going to go to that place is the only time for dog packs. And meanwhile they too carried packs. She would be packing a baby, but even so, underneath it she carried a pack too, that's how they did. Oh!
[Alice asked a question.]	
Dinjii niłihil'ee t'igwinyaa shitseii. Izhik dąį' zhyaa diigwiindak googaa oo'ok vadraii t'igwii'in kwaa googaa treediinyaa t'igwinyaa. Akwat ch'ichį' naatth'ak kwaa ts'a' dink'iidhat t'oonchy'aa.	Men respected each other, grandchild. In those days, when somebody got hurt, even though they had nothing to do with that person, people would still get together and mourn for him. You didn't hear about deaths so much then when I was growing up.
Gohch'it ree hee gwanaa gwats'an ree dinjii niłihk'ii neelee gwats'an ree zhyaa it'ee ree zhyaa dinjii hahłik ts'a'.	Some time ago there were two epidemics, and from that time on, people just started to die off.

Aaa! zhyaa diingwiindak gwinyaa.	Ah! people only had accidents back then, it seems.
Nats’ahts’a’ gook’at deegwandak dhak li’ zhyaa tthak zhyaa treegaahnyaa.	Somehow they would apparently get the news that someone had been hurt, and they would just cry.
Akwat ch’ichį’ ji’ gwintł’oo neeshraahchy’aa adagahaatsyaa.	And when there was a death, they would make themselves suffer a lot.
Aiits’a’ aii ginkhii nąįį ch’ichį’ k’at tr’igwidii nitsii tr’ahtsii ree khik gwits’eech’ee’yaa, gwits’i’ jyaa dinchy’aa kwaii haa gwintł’oo gwitr’it gwaatsii kwaa ts’a’ gwigwiłtsąįį t’iginchy’aa.	But then the preachers prevented people from making great mourning over deaths, they prevented them from doing that and people don’t do that any more; they can’t work very hard at grieving.
Izhik dąį’ tr’agwaahk’ik ts’a’ kǫ’ googaa eeneeriidal gwinyaa.	At that time, they would build a fire and they even went into the fire, it is said.
Aii ree shandaa t’igwii’in kwaa. Gaa ree shandaa gwandak gook’at deedhak hee treediinyaa roo.	I never saw that. But I did see when bad news came to them, how they all cried over it.
Akwat juk t’igwii’in ji’ nats’aa hee teegwiheedhat li’.	I wonder how it would be if that happened nowadays.
Gwintł’oo dinjii nikheetsai’ t’igwinyaa.	They were very possessive of each other.
[Alice asked a question.]	
Akwat oo’ok naraazhrii gwiizhik it’ee ree deegwąhtsii k’eech’aahkaii, izhik gwanaa chan tr’ikhit gwintł’oo k’eech’araahkaii t’oonchy’aa.	Then while they were hunting, while they did that, the woman would sew a lot; in those days people always sewed a lot.
Akwat it’ee googwitr’it gwanlįį akwat ree goodinjii gihiljii dąį’ ree k’eech’araahkaii chan ch’adhaa tr’ahkii.	They had a lot of work to do, and when their men were away they sewed, and also tanned skins.
Aii kwaii ts’a’ aaa! shitseii łąįį k’eerąąhtii.	That too, and also, oh, grandchild, we took care of the dogs.
Łąįį k’eerąąhtii akwat ts’a’ gook’iitł’it deegwąąhchy’aa deegwąhkhyuk gogwahahthaa gavaa gwiindaii.	We took care of the dogs; and we knew how long they were going to be gone.

Akwat ts'a' zhyaa it'ee k'ineegiheedal ts'a' tr'iilee givee vikehgahchy'aa it'ee ree.	And they just were going to come back home then so we had food ready for them.
Akwat ch'agaahkhwąįį ts'a' tr'injaa chan tr'iinin aghwaa googaa chan zhik shih tr'ooheendal ch'eerinjyaa aii chan tr'injaa jyaa dii'in t'oonchy'aa.	And when they killed something, a woman, even though she was packing a baby, would go out after the meat, that woman would go out after it, that's what she did.
Łąįį ghwaa chan t'ąąhchy'aa ts'a' tr'iinin aghwaa gwiizhik łąįį ghwaa zhit shih aii haa łąįį jyaa dah'in.	She would use a dog pack while she was packing the baby and she put the meat in that dog pack, that's how she used the dog.
Aaa! shitseii łyaa tr'injaa vakąį' vitsi' hiljii dąį' łyaa gwitr'it t'agwah'in.	Oh, grandchild! when the woman's husband was gone she really worked.
Yik'iitł'it gwitr'it gwintsii gwahtsii. Kheegwiilk'a' ts'a' chan traa chan kheenjit nizįį daatsii chųų chan kheenjit nizįį daatsii.	She did a lot of work in his absence. She kept the fire burning and also she kept up a large supply of firewood and water.
Gwiizhik k'eech'aahkaii, akwat ch'ahkhii dąį' chan ch'adhaa chan yik'iitł'it shrilii, jyaa dii'in.	Meanwhile, she sewed, and when she was tanning, in his absence, she prepared the skins, that's what she did.
Łąą tr'injaa nąįį neiilii kwaa.	Women never kept still.
Aaa! shitseii łyaa zhyaa gwinzįį geegwaldak. Ben gwandaii dąį' tr'ikhit chan t'inyaa roo. Shįį ree zhyaa gwinzįį geegwaldak.	Ah! grandchild, I just really tell a story right. When Ben was living he always exaggerated, but I really tell the story the way it was.
[Alice asked a question.]	
Izhik ree gwinzįį gaashandaii kwaa izhik ree gwik'it teihgihkhii gashragwąąhchy'aa kwaa.	I don't know much about that; I don't like to talk about it when I don't know it well.
It'ee ree dinjii ree t'adoolnąįį dąį' hee than hee gwats'a' hoiizhii ts'a' juk dzaa deihchy'aa gwik'it gwats'a' gwizhrii roo. Łąą deegii'in gavaashandaii kwaa.	Well then, when I got married I went off there alone just like I am now, that's how it was. I didn't know what they were doing.
Duuyee izhik dąį' chan khaihtak ninghuk tr'agwahthaa kwaa t'oonchy'aa. Khaihtak gwaatsii kwaa zhyaa naraazhrii gwizhrii.	In those days people didn't spend much time visiting. They didn't visit much, they just hunted, that's all.

Tseedhaa chan keerii'in kwaa.
Jaghaii t'ee vinkeerihee'yaa gǫǫ?
Ch'arookwat ree gaagwiindaii kwaa nats'aa.

Shandaa ree gohch'it ree
tseedhaa keerii'in gwich'in.
Gehnaa ree
chan yeenduk akoo digwii'in gaa ch'adhaa chan
tr'ookwat, tł'il chan tr'ookwat,
aadzii tr'ookwat
dazhoo tr'ookwat
nilįį gąįh chan
ch'aghwaa ghwai' tr'ahtsii.
Aii haa zhrii ch'ookwat zhee chan
ch'ookwat nilįį ginyaa t'inchy'aa.

Akwat aii ree
juunchy'aa
Saturday dąį'
dinjii
tthak ch'ookwat zhee gwats'a'
neegwahaa'yaa aii
nilįį gąįh khwaii kwaii haa
zhyaa giyuukwat kwaa ts'a' goots'an tr'ahtsii.
Izhik yuu gwintł'oo aakin ch'igwiidlįį.

Akwat zhik ch'igii dhaa kwaii ree oo'ok neeshraahchy'aa nąįį giyaak'ąąhtii gwizhrii ree.

Akwat vaanoodlit nąįį k'eiich'i' kwaii yi'eenii tr'igwihilii łyaa gogwantrii roo.

Nats'ahts'a' dzaa gwa'an vigwiheelyaa gǫǫ?
Khwah haa gwitr'it t'agwaa'in t'igwinyaa akwat.

Jyaa doonchy'aa.

Gwintł'oo gwigwiintrii.
K'eiich'ii tsal
yeenihjyaa hijyaa gwaatsii aii tr'ikhit natsal.
Akwat ts'a' dinjii yaajyaa aii kwat
ch'ihłan drin zhrii gwagwadhan akwat dagwąhtsii zhyaa ch'ookwat zhee geenjit gwee'i' nąįį t'arahnyaa.

[Alice asked a question.]

Izhik

We didn't hunt for furs, either.
What would we hunt them for anyway?
We didn't know about buying things.

Finally, during my lifetime,
we started hunting for furs, I think.
Before then
they used to do that upriver, and
someone bought the furs, and they bought babiche,
they bought caribou skins
and caribou skins with the hair on,
and also dried meat
and the grease they made.
Those are the things the traders
bought and then they sold it.

And then
when it was
Saturday
all
the people would
go to the store and
they would buy the meat and grease;
they would trade for it.
It was quite novel and remarkable.

And those poor people out in the woods would just bring caribou calf skins, that's all.

And it was really hard for the white men to bring all that stuff over here.

How could they bring a lot of things here?
They did all that work only with pack sacks.

That's how it was.

It was very hard in those times.
They brought a little,
but they could never bring very much.
They only had enough food in the store for one day's trading, so they say.

At that time

gwanaa t'ee theetryą' tyąh tsal dzaa yeedit Gwichyaa Zhee chan kwaiik'it gwagwąh'e' gwinyaa nahąą.
Aii t'ee dinehnaa hee t'igwii'in.

Akwat ts'a'
aii gwats'an theetryą' tyąą shriit'ąhtsii dinjii teegąąhchy'aa goodlit ginyaa t'iginchy'aa.
Aii gwiyeendaa nitsii kwaa t'agahnyaa.

Aii zhit
shih tsal gaavir.
Kwat ts'a' giichų' zhrii dinii.
Akoo geetak hee chųų gaahłii dǫhłii, chųų k'ąą ree giinii.
Lidii kwaa nats'aa.
Zhyaa yee'ok hee chiits'it neehidik aii, k'it ree t'iginchy'aa roo.

Akwat ts'a'
nin tsal keegii'in gaa chan ree
geetak hee oondaa gwagwaahk'ik
jeł nihky'aa jidii ch'ok tr'ahtsik aii joł oozhii
aii haa oondaa kǫ' ts'a' giitich'iił'ee.
Jyaa geetak hee t'igwii'in roo.
Aii gwik'it gwizhrii.
Aii t'ee jidii shih kwan nyaa tr'ǫhchy'aa k'it t'inchy'aa aii t'agah'in.
Akoo tr'ohvir k'it t'inchy'aa aii chan gahvir ts'a' giichų' giyaadinii.

Googaa gwandaa gwinzįį dinjii gwandaii.
Shitseii akwat zhyaa k'eiich'ii tthak tr'aajyaa nats'aa tr'iits'aa
dinjii tthak ach'agwadhan k'it shaa t'oonchy'aa.

[Alice asked if she knew anything about the brush man.]

they had copper pots downriver at Ft. Yukon where they had a settlement, you see.
It was way before we had a store.

And then
from that time on, there came the medium-sized copper pots that everyone had.

They weren't very big, they say.

In that
they boiled a little meat
and then they drank the broth.
Maybe sometimes they were thirsty for water, then they drank plain water.
There was no tea.
Just something that's out in the woods, something like that.

And then
they hunted small animals but
sometimes they cooked them over the fire;
they made a stick pointed on the ends, which they called *joł*,
and with that they roasted things over the fire.
Sometimes we did that.
Just like that.
And whatever food they had to live on they just cooked in those ways.
And what they could boil they boiled, and drank the broth.

Even so, people lived really well in those days.

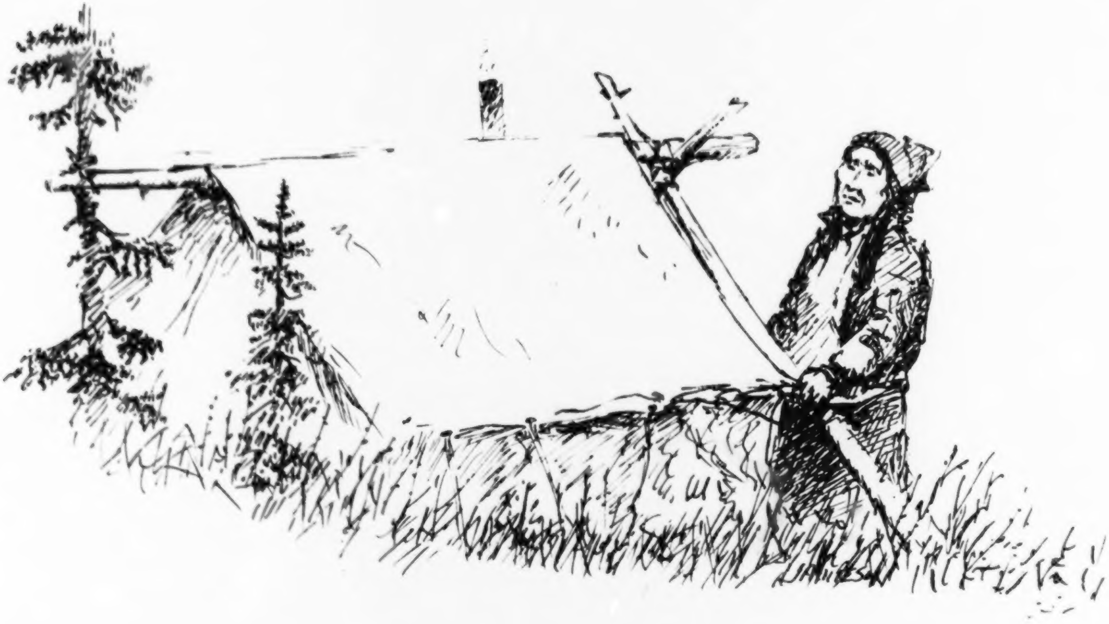
Grandchild, now we just eat all kinds of stuff,
and people just die off, that's the way it seems to me.

Izhik ree gaashandaii kwaa.	I don't know about that.
Juk tth'aii hee naa'in gwanlįį gwinyaa roo.	They say today there's still some brush men!
Yeedee Arctic Village gwa'an ree akwat googaa ree gaashandaii kwaa roo.	Up there around Arctic Village; but I really don't know about it.
Deenaadąį' datsan gwanlįį dinjii teech'idlį'.	In the old days there was famine and people would freeze to death.
Aiits'a' yeenaa tr'injaa kheedaachik ts'a' tr'al ahak. Geetak hee dinjii kheedaachik aii chan tr'al ahak. Aii an gwii'jį gwaatsii aii nąįį nan zhit t'iginchy'aa, juk tth'aii gwaatth'aa ji' gaa gaagwiindaii kwaa t'oonchy'aa.	Well then, long ago a woman would survive and go into the brush. Sometimes a man would survive and he too would go into the brush. They had dens that they made for themselves and those people lived in the ground; maybe it's still that way today, but we don't know about it.
It'ee łyaa dlįh, dinjii teech'idlį' ts'a' ch'ihłak kheedaachik aii zhyaa akwat anadąhndak ts'a' nan zhit an gwahtsii izhik t'ee.	And really, death, people would freeze to death; but one man would take off and make himself a hole in the ground and stay in it.
Akwat tr'injaa ch'ihłak chan ree jyaa diizhik łii chan ree kheedaachii chan ree varagwąh'aii gwinyaa t'oonchy'aa.	Or one woman perhaps would do that, I guess; she took off and then somebody would find her, so it's said.
Yeedit Venetie izhik gehdee.	There at Venetie, above there.
K'ǫǫ łangoo'ee gwa'an hee.	There are a lot of creeks around there.
Dinjii yak'at deedhizhii k'iighai' yigwąh'ąįį gwinyaa t'oonchy'aa.	A man came upon her there and found her, so they say.
Aiits'a' dinjii t'inyaa łii ree gwinyaa.	And so the man told about it, they say.
Dinjii k'eegwiichy'aa gwatsal gaa kheedaachii aii zhyaa than adanąhndak aii eegiginkhii t'iginyaa.	And so those people that almost died but survived and lived alone by themselves, are the ones they talk about.

[Alice asked if she ever saw one.]

Łąą ree nakwaa, nats'aa gwik'iighai' naa'in haał'yaa.	No, indeed, how would I ever see a brush man!

Gwinyaa gwizhrii tr'igwiitth'ak.	We just hear about it, that's all.
Bella ree naa'in nąh'yą' aii ree vakwaa. Francis vitr'injaa.	Bella saw a brush man, but she died. Francis's wife.



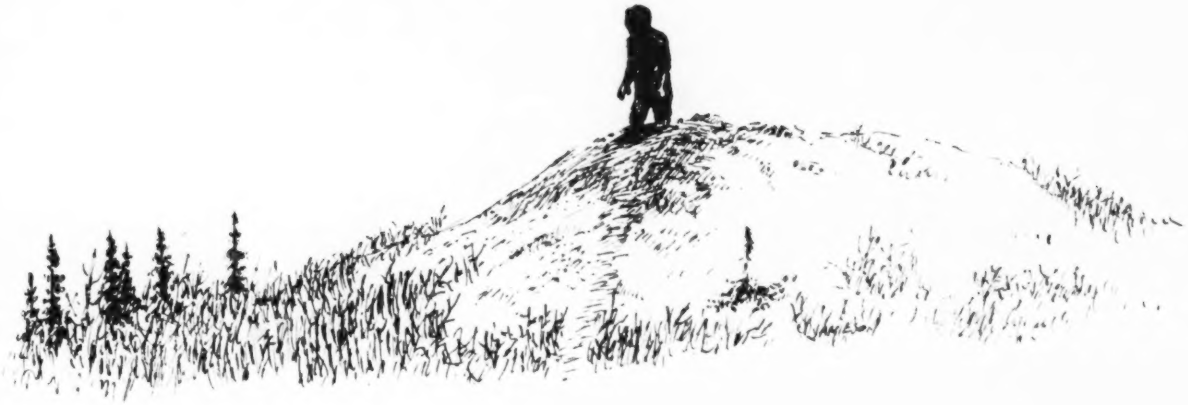
Shitseii aii t'ee yeenjit Kheetsik gwigwich'ii chy'aa gwinįhjyaa ts'ąįį nagaazhrii dǫhłii.	Grandchild, they were living up at Kheetsik and were coming down and hunting too, maybe.
Aiits'a' giihaa dǫhłii gwiindhaa ts'a' nihky'aa zheegwadhaa t'inchy'aa dǫhłii.	And then I guess they were camping, and as it was warm, they had the tent flap open.
Aiits'a' ree yeedit k'ii'ee tąįh tr'uu niin'ee dǫhłii.	And then there was this brushy hill with a bare top.
Akwat ts'a' tr'ineedhat dǫhłii.	And right then she woke up, I guess.
Aiits'a' ree oonin tąįh kak gwąąh'in ts'a' t'inchy'aa akwat ree izhik k'iinin gwąąh'in dǫhłii.	And then she saw something opposite her on the exposed gravel hill, she saw something right over there opposite her.

Zhik k'iinaa zhyaa ree dinjii tr'iinzhii.

Ah
aiits'a' ree zhat k'aii tsal gwanandaa'ee
aii tthat naa'ąį' tąįh tr'uu kak zhyaa ree naadii.

And there was a man, coming toward her!

Ah,
and there where little willows grew,
right there he passed and sat down on the gravel hill.



Gwiizhik t'ee Francis dak ahnyaa łii.

Akwat ts'a'
zhyaa ree nigiyul'in dǫhłii.
Ninehjin ts'a' ree ndak ts'a' k'eegwaanąįį
yahnyaa
shaagwaandak.

Jyaa gwizhrii ree.

Łyaa t'igwinyaa gwich'in shitseii
oo'ok ch'eekwaii nąįį t'agahnyaa
ch'eekwaii nąįį yee'at ddhah tee
k'ii'an t'eedaroo'ya' ilii ehjyaa nahgǫǫ ginyaa izhik t'eedagaa'in aii t'ahnyaa dǫhłii.

Akwat t'ee naa'in nah'yą' gwinzįį shaagwaandak vaagwandak.

Meanwhile, she woke Francis up.

And then
they both waited for him, I guess.
He stood up and then he disappeared again,
she said about him,
as she told me.

That's all.

I think it's true, grandchild,
and they're talking about Eskimos out there
for there are Eskimos up that way among the mountains;
but it's said to be a good place to hunt,
and it's not very far to where they live,
so perhaps it's them they're talking about.

So that is the story she told me about the brush man—you tell him good.

[Alice asked if people were religious long ago even though there was no priest.]

Ginkhii kwaa izhik	There was no priest there,
dinjii gwik’injijii nąįį	but there were religious people
łyaa ninghit dąį’	long ago;
hee gwats’at ginkhii goodlit gwinyaa googaa	since then the priests came, they say, but
łi’haa	really
dinjii	people
ginjii eedagoodąąhtan haa gwitr’it gwintsii deegwiiltsąįį gwiizhik t’ee gwi’ik gwiizhi’ t’oonchy’aa.	studied the word and they worked very hard on it and by and by they began to understand it.
Aii dęhtły’aa chan gwanlįį kwaa roo.	There were not even any books at that time.
Ginkhii dyąąhch’i’	The Old Man preacher
aii dęhtły’aa aghan ts’a’	made those books and
jeiinchy’aa geeshinyaahchii gwinyaa, k’iighai’ gwee’an dęhtły’aa gwanlįį gwinyaa t’oonchy’aa.	they say he made books until he was very old, and that’s why there are books around here.
Ndaa ts’a’ chan	And later on
dęhtły’aa neeheekwaa hagaa gwinyaa t’oonchy’aa.	they say there won’t be any more of those books.
Shitseii	Grandchild,
dinjii łyaa	people were really
gwintł’oo gǫǫltin.	taught a lot.
Khik zhyaa ree tr’igijiinjii gwizhrii ree.	We always pray, that’s all.
Drin zhit hee chan neekwąįį datthak gwideetik chan.	Twice on Sunday, and every day in between too.
Aaa! shitseii, heedąį’ ninghit kwaa gwanaa	Ah, grandchild, a few years back
shigii t’ee ch’anjaa ilįį gwiizhik it’ee ch’ijuk	when my son was getting older, then everything
nagwaatth’at	changed
ts’a’ ndaa łigweedhaa ts’a’ nji’ nji’ gwatth’aa k’it t’oonchy’aa juk.	and it keeps getting worse and worse; it’s like that now.
Gwik’it chan łąą ch’ichį’ chan t’ii’in.	The deaths are like that, too.
Ndaa ts’a’ zhyaa diintehraahk’ee	Maybe later on people will just kill us off with guns,
k’it t’igwihee’yaa.	it’ll be like that.
Kwat ts’a’	And then
chan	too
niłarahaak’ee ts’a’	people will shoot each other and
gwinzįį gwintł’eegwada’aii gwahtsii k’it t’iihęę’yaa gwinyaa t’oonchy’aa.	think they’re doing a really good thing; they say it’ll be that way.
Aii gwik’it juk gweedhaa.	That’s the way it is today.

Łyaa dinjii gwik'injighit niighit dąį' gwats'an hee K'eegwaadhat gwinyaa gwik'it gaandaii nąįį gwanlįį t'oonchy'aa.	But some people still believe as they did a long time ago, like the Lord, it is said; there are people living in that way.

[Alice asked if she could read Dagǫǫ.]

Akwaa ninghit dąį' gwats'an hee nitsii vakwaa gwats'a' ninghit kwaa oodit tr'iginkhii zhee David ginkhii tr'ihiłtsąįį oonduk outside hee neerahahchik aii vik'iitł'uu tr'iginkhii gwałtsii.	No; a long time ago just before your grandfather died, up there in the church David was going to become a preacher and they took him Outside and while he was gone I substituted for the preacher.
Nitsii shits'i' vakwaa gwats'an.	That was after your grandfather died.
Akwat dzaa gwizhit chan datthak shee nihdeegiidal Bible eegavaałtan.	Everyone came into my house and I taught them the Bible.
Akhai' shaagweech'in kwaa goodlit.	And then I lost my eyesight.
Shaagweech'in kwaa ts'a' zhyaa ree jyaa dihchy'aa shiłtsąįį ts'a' jyaa dihchy'aa.	I lost my eyesight and it made me like this, as I am now.
Kwat łąą noł'ya' ts'a' t'oonchy'aa kwaa.	There's no way I can see it now.
Aii khaii McDonald nał'yą' t'arahnyaa.	That winter I saw McDonald.
Jyaa dinchy'aa dzaa dagwat deetak nashahthat gaa dzaa viki' ehdak tr'ikyaał'ee roo.	He let me stand between his knees, and when he was sitting, I was taller than his head.
Kwaa roo.	No, indeed.
Aii gwiizhik nał'yą' t'ee.	That's when I saw him.
Chy'aa nishinshihiłchįį gwiizhik at'oohju' hee vakwaa.	And long ago, when I was getting older, that's when he died.
Yeenihjyaa ts'ąįį vitr'injaa k'iinii needyaa łii ree. Nał'yą' roo.	Over on the other side, when his wife was coming back, I saw her.
Łi'haa ginkhii dyąąhch'i' gwitr'it gwiłtsąįį.	Really, the preacher Old Man worked hard.

Yaa nitsii viti' chan
yeenjit Teetł'it
yeenjit
Eagle
Teetsii gwidi' haa tthak geech'oołtin
t'arahnyaa.

Yaa nitsii viti'
aii gwik'it aii ginkhii dyąąhch'i'
aii haa.

Aii shitsii ginkhii aii yeenji' ts'ąįį hee
gwiginkhii niljį.

Jyaa gwizhrii ree.

Now your grandfather's father also,
up at Teetł'it,
upriver
at Eagle
and downriver at Teetsii, he taught at
all those places.

That's your grandfather's father;
he was like that with the preacher Old Man
with him.

And my grandfather was a preacher upriver;
he was their preacher there.

And that's all.

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